The Pulpit

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A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

Warren Carr:

The Christian Ethic

Preston N. Williams • Doing as One Pleases
Alan Walker • Christians under Capitalism
Vere V. Loper • God of Our Fathers
Donald Macleod • Big Enough for Freedom
Robert A. Thomas • Experiment in Training

ROY PEARSON
THE SOUND OF THE BUGLE

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The Pulpit

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PULPIT POST

Poll Tax Text

SIR: "Responsible Christian Citizenship" by Byron L. Johnson (May issue) contains some excellent ideas and ideals and uncontestable truth. The author, however, justifies our erroneous zigzag journey from one annihilation to another with his full illumination of both ancient and modern dichotomous practices. He quotes, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." Immediately he says, "This recognition of our duality of citizenship in both the temporal and spiritual realms has remained a basic part of Christian teaching ever since." It has so remained; however, it is half-past time that it no longer so remains!

I grew up in a poll tax state and have paid poll tax in order to vote. The Hon. Byron L. Johnson is not fostering a bigger and better poll tax system. His interpretation and application of the text he uses, however, is unquestionably running with the native southern poll tax rabbit and hunting with the sovereign States' rights hounds. That he intends to do this we deny. That he does do it we do not deny.

We continue to start with Casear and then try to work up to God. Jesus' followers did not receive any such fictional teaching from their Master. Is Caesar not to be told what is or is not his? If we believe in Caesar's way, so be it. If we believe in God's way, so be it. "You have one master, the Christ." And the usual interpretation of the "poll tax text" is impossible, and it is time we avoid any such erroneous and irritating glare as we try to produce from it.

C. SUMPTER LOGAN
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SIR: In a recently published sermon on "Why Do I Have to Be 'Me'?" the author asks why did he have to be born in a windswept part of Kansas of no historical importance as compared with Virginia.

Many times in my life I have been surprised by the way a listener can grab some sentence, correctly or incorrectly quoted, and throw a fit about it. For years I have wanted to throw such a fit and here is my chance.

As the present chancellor of the Westport Historical Society and for

(Continued on page 31)

The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

VOLUME XXXI JULY 1960 NO. 7

Let There Be Care about Words

IF THE first law of the sermon is that the minister should have something to say, the second is that he should know how to say it. This *how to* refers not to the vocal delivery of the sermon, important as that may be, but to the literary composition of the sermon, to its form. The radical defect in current preaching is the absence of that passion which consumes the minister when God grips him with a Word to speak. Pushing this radical defect as a challenger for first place, however, is the lack of a literary style which conveys the Word from speaker to hearer without loss of power.

All of us must grant that too many of our sermons are amoeboid, pools of literary protoplasm flowing in all directions at once. Too many of them are cluttered with lumbering, ponderous sentences: subclauses added to secondary clauses added to subordinate clauses until no one, including the speaker, knows what is actually being said. Or, on the other hand, many of our sermons, when we try to give them shape, become gaunt and skeletal, all bones and no flesh. Correcting this second deficiency means work; for most of us it means hard work, the labor through which passion entrusts its power to style.

The skillful homiletician will not be interested in style for style's sake. He will know instinctively or he will have learned that when the style of the sermon is made an end in itself, the sermon becomes affected, self-conscious and mechanical. He preaches a gospel, not a style. He knows that artificial embellishments which give glitter and polish to a sermon will also inevitably sheathe its cutting edge. However, when we speak of homiletical style we are not thinking of adornments. "Style," as J. Middleton Murray said, "is organic, not the clothes a man wears, but the flesh, blood, and bone of his body." The idea of the sermon must find a form — its own organic form — or remain an invisible, inaudible, secret abstraction. If the language misleads, deceives, confuses or proves inadequate, then the idea, the sermonic proposal, dies in transmission, however virile it may be.

Every sermon has at least three claims upon good literary form. First the truthfulness and the veracity of the sermon are tested by the style of the sermon. Coleridge insisted on "the importance of accuracy of style as being near akin to veracity and truthful habits of mind; he who thinks loosely will write loosely." The corollary for ministers is that he who preaches loosely has thought loosely. If the homiletical idea refuses to emerge in plain, vital, intelligible form, the minister must conclude either that the idea is not valid and worthy of the pulpit or that he has not given it the time, the skill and the exploration it deserves.

Secondly, the sacredness of the sermonic idea deserves excellent style and is defamed if we do not grant to that idea the finest structure we are able to give it. If it is worth preaching, it is worth preaching well. To write carelessly, to speak carelessly is to imply that the thoughts being conveyed are not really very important after all. "Rightly handling the word of truth" requires neither unctuous tones nor ornate phrases but it does require that we put "apples of gold" in nothing less than "pictures of silver." We can do this and still "be natural, be simple, be yourself: shun artifices, tricks, fashions."

And finally communication demands good style. Religious art has been defined as the successful communication of a valuable religious experience. The sermon is one form of that art; an effective sermon is a successful communication of a valuable religious experience through the spoken word. The minister must therefore make himself the master of that language which promotes the flow, the impact, the penetration and the reception of ideas. A sermon is not a soliloquy accidentally overheard by a congregation. It is not a monologue which can arrogantly say to listeners, "Find out what I mean if you can." A sermon is a dialogue. The spoken part of this sermonic dialogue — if in this area we may take advice from Schopenhauer — must be especially clear precisely because the speaker cannot hear the unspoken part of the dialogue which takes place within the mind of the listener. The success of the sermon depends not only upon the adequacy of the listener but primarily upon the clarity, the winsomeness and the power of that form in which the sermon emerges. If the minister is determined that there shall be such a dialogue, that meaning shall be conveyed and received through his sermon, his style will begin to take care of itself.

KYLE HASELDEN

The Christian Ethic

By Warren Carr

THE Christian ethic is neither primarily nor ultimately concerned with making this a better world in which to live. This explains modern man's impatience with it and its exponents. Ethical concepts have been tossed about by every generation. Few civilizations ignore them in their scheme of political and social life. Without exception their preoccupation with ethics is motivated by their interest in their own environments and societies. It is understandable that an ethic which looks beyond such temporal goals receives less than an enthusiastic response from them.

The world cannot establish the ultimate ethic. Since the world is not the basic source of the Christian ethic, it is not likely that it can furnish its necessary perspective. The Sermon on the Mount, while not exhaustively defining Christian ethics, does suggest its involvement with a kingdom which is not of this world. It is implied that this is the Kingdom of God which will not pass away with the end of history. The Beatitudes describe a kingdom individual for a kingdom society. Initially, the Christian ethic involves those who are committed to the reign of God and who live with him and one another in the covenant relationship.

Sensitive pulpits have made their attempts to proclaim a gospel that will soften the offense which modern man feels because of its seeming otherworldliness. They have dressed it in the practical garb of the present. The motif here expressed of the gospel's primary concern is not likely to win accolades from those of a style-conscious theology. Men are so bent upon finding a religion "that can be lived" as to dismiss the religion "that ought to be lived." The church faces a real challenge. It cannot dilute the Christian ethic with the additives of the temporal order. At the same time it must prove the relevance and value of such an ethic to the world.

WARREN CARR, *who has served pastorates in Coeburn, Virginia, and Princeton, West Virginia, is now pastor of Watts Street Baptist Church, Durham, North Carolina. He was graduated from Transylvania College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary where he received the Th.M. degree. Mr. Carr also serves as a part-time faculty member of Duke Divinity School.*

The success of Warren Carr as a preacher is widely acclaimed in the south. This incisive sermon, which declares the source, the application, the effectiveness and the purpose of the Christian ethic will not detract from that reputation. We are happy to present this sermon to our readers, not only because of its own excellence but also because it is illustrative of a quality of preaching which needs to be encouraged in the south and throughout the nation.

Inadequacy of Moral Philosophy

Moral philosophy provides no abiding solution to the dilemma. The moral philosopher, according to George Thomas in *Christian Ethics and Moral Philosophy,* exacts an overarching ethical principle from the plethora of society's moral ideas. The use of reason is paramount in this selective process. This is to assume that man is sufficiently resourceful within himself to find and to do the truth. Revelation is unnecessary in the initial stages of discovering what is true. God may be called upon in the later progressions toward the ultimate. He is, however, always an ally and never a necessity.

Dr. Thomas provides an insightful critique of this approach to social problems. First of all, philosophy in selecting an overarching principle assumes a remote and detached position from life among the masses. As a synthesis of the many-sided principles of group behavior, it is more judgmental than functional. It can only appeal to the individual to come aside from the common people and, accepting its truth, sit in judgment upon them. Secondly, the process is overly speculative and objective. The prophetic quality is absent because there is no leader, incarnate among the people, whom they will follow. Perhaps the most significant criticism is the last one. This endeavor at truth never really rises above man's resources. Its apparent transcendence is actually a mirage. The same human thought and will which leads man into crisis is now expected to deliver him. What seems to be an overarching principle is no more than a cluster of ideas out to one side of ordinary thought. If man is to gain ethical perspective, it will not come short of hearing the word of God. Only the truth which comes from above can lift humanity from the pit.

The ethical counsel of secular society will usually bear out this truth. A cabinet member, once active in the present administration, brusquely observed some time ago: "What's good for General Motors is good for the nation." This left many of

us unconvinced. There is just as much reason to doubt, under secular counsel, that "what's good for the world is good for the Kingdom."

War is one example. Despite the claim of the idealist, it is possible to distinguish the right from the wrong nation in international conflict. Granting that it may be a matter of degree, one side is usually less guilty than the other. Assuming this to be true, the ethical secularist may rush for the first launching pad on the right side and shoot his deadly missiles into the camp of the unrighteous. Life is not that simple. When Christ was on trial before Pilate there was little question as to the right side. But Jesus explained, "My Kingdom is not founded in this world — if it were, my servants would fight to prevent my being handed over to the Jews. But in fact my Kingdom is not founded on all this!" (Phillips' translation). If the only question was that of the rightness of Christ's teaching and life, he would have been justified in commandeering his disciples to fight for him. Since his kingship was not of the world, a new ethical dimension was introduced. The sword was sheathed. The new weapon was a cross.

A Case in Point

Here in the south we are caught in the grip of the race crisis. Secular counsel offers what appear to be ethical answers to the dilemma. By taking the overarching principle, philosophically speaking, of seeking the highest good for the greatest number of people, the continuance of segregation commends itself. Desegregation offers a long period of unpleasantness. We shall be living under the constant threat of violence. Our public school system is in jeopardy. The Negro, moving in desperation, is so aggressive as to alienate the moderates and make even his strongest white advocates question some of his actions. Churches with white congregations are being put to the acid test. Many of them have already split into opposing camps filled with bitterness and hostility toward former friends and fellow church members. There are those who genuinely wish for an end to the tempest and turmoil. We are so tired of crisis that the exponent of peace and order receives a good hearing in our midst. Any means of eliminating the tension would be desirable. This sort of ethical answer is never ultimate. Justice and love are the twin counterparts of the Kingdom ethic. We cannot rest until we have asked ourselves how men must live together in Christ. What is the nature of the covenant society? These question marks are hung in the heavens. And we know that the answer is complete freedom of movement by the children of God without reference to race. Again I say, the Christian ethic is not achieved short of hearing the Word of God. The problem-solving techniques of man will not stand the test of God nor the ravages of time. There will be no assurance of peace and righteousness in the land until we make the selfsame discovery as came to a little Irish lad. Brought back from the brink of death by an apparent miracle, he said to a friendly lady who had sat through the long vigil, "I always knew that Jesus was necessary, but I never knew till now that He was enough."

The criticism is certain that an otherworldly ethic has been structured. As such it must inevitably be both untimely and irrelevant. Man is not willing to wait for the hope in T. S. Eliot's *The Rock:*

> There shall always be the Church and the World
> And the Heart of Man
> Shivering and fluttering between them, choosing
> and chosen,
> Valiant, ignoble, dark and full of light
> Swinging between Hell Gate and Heaven Gate
> And the Gates of Hell shall not prevail
> Darkness now, then
> Light.*

Man need not wait. Christians must be the first to admit with disarming candor that their ethic is otherworldly. It does not belong to and is not structured by the world's design. In the same breath let them stubbornly deny that it is untimely and irrelevant. The church with its Kingdom ethic does speak to those who are concerned about life here and now.

The church in ancient times may appear to have been different in this respect. It gave the impression of withdrawing from the world. As Waldo Beach and H. Richard Niebuhr observe in *Christian Ethics:* "The individual Christian thought and acted with a strong sense of being a member of a new, self-conscious community and fellowship of believers, over against the world, with a common memory, a common mission, and a common destiny." There are those who believe that the stance of the ancient church against the world stemmed from its expectation of the early return of Christ. It is true that the first Christians felt more keenly than we do that they were living in a "world destined to pass away." It is more probable, however, that the implications of an imminent "second coming" were not as influential in the church's position as was its determination to be "in the world though not of it."

The Sermon on the Mount does not turn its back upon the world and its problems. Such counsel as "walk the second mile" belonged to the Roman law which compelled a Jew to carry a centurion's gear for the length of one mile. This determination in the Judaic-Christian theology to remain down to earth runs the entire concourse of its history. The prophets were conscious of time and place to an astonishing degree. Isaiah received his vision and call in the year that King Uzziah died. Jeremiah was a prophet in the "days of Josiah, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah." Nehemiah,

* From *The Rock* by T. S. Eliot, copyright, 1934, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc. and reprinted with their permission.

exiled cup-bearer to the king, notes that it was the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes that he determined to rebuild Jerusalem. Ezekiel writes, ". . . in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the exiles by the river Chebar, the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God." Amos was remembered: "among the shepherds of Tekoa, . . . he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah, and in the days of Jereboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake. . . ." When the "Word became flesh and dwelt among us," it was in this wise. "In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment when Quirinius was governor of Syria. . . . And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem. . . ."

It does not really matter that the scriptural chronology is found to be inaccurate in a number of instances. What is significant is that the Bible was written by those to whom history was important as evidenced in their endeavor to date the mighty acts of God.

Light in a Darkening World

The Beatitudes may seem to leave this earth and soar above reality. We may think them to be unconcerned with the mundane because of the transcendent virtues they espouse. That would be a fallacious assumption. In the wake of their lofty concepts the Teacher says, "You are the salt of the earth. . . . You are the light of the world." If his disciples shared our suspicion that these were lyrics meant for heaven alone, they were quickly brought down to earth. Jesus made a decision which Sir Walford Davies was to make in a much later time. Davies was a great musician of England. He probably would have been even greater had he not decided to share himself and his music with the wider audience of the English masses. A fellow musician Dr. Vaughan Williams paid him this tribute: "It is an eternal problem that confronts all those who feel they have the creative impulse — 'shall I shut myself up from the world and follow the dictates of my own artistic conscience, or shall I go down to the world of men and show them what I have learned about eternity and beauty?' Walford Davies had no doubts — he was a born preacher and determined to go and preach to the Gentiles. This decision was probably right." This was the music which Jesus played. His disciples were salt, preserving and giving flavor to life's true values. In the darkening world they were light pointing to the glory of God.

The Christian who is determined to live according to the fundamental spirit of those who are in Christ need not worry about becoming remote from the world in which he lives. A secular society will see to it that he becomes involved. The light of the world has the quality of exposure and judgment. If man cannot run from its revealing rays he will try to put it out. So long as the Christian, in the world, expresses the ethics of the Kingdom not of this world he will be in conflict with the secular. He will have to stand fast on his beachhead to keep from being pushed into the sea.

The supreme quality of the Christian ethic, which is love, is the Christian's certain assurance of being involved with his world. It is good that he is like those who "acknowledge that they were strangers and exiles in the earth. For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is a heavenly one. . . ." Actually, the Christian has no vested interest, no ultimate stake, in his world. He makes his witness of love in the context of disinterestedness rather than enlightened self-interest.

It is love which impels us, without promise of return, propelled by the ethic that comes from above to seek the redemption of man and his society. It is love which sees "how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings." Love preserves that selfsame beauty when the "feet of him who brings good tidings" walk through the mire of the mundane and open up the hearts of men to the Holy God.

Thoughts on Preaching

✚ I FIND more profit in sermons on either good tempers or good works than in what are vulgarly called gospel sermons. The term has now become a mere cant word: I wish none of our society would use it. It has no determinate meaning. Let but a pert, self-sufficient animal, that has neither sense nor grace, bawl out something about Christ, or his blood, or justification by faith, and his hearers cry out, "What a fine gospel sermon!" — *John Wesley*

✚ ALAS for the unhappy man that is called to stand in the pulpit, and not give the bread of life. — *Emerson*

✚ THEY build them [ships down in Maine] by the mile; and when they have an order they cut off so much, round up a stern and a bow, and send it. Thus some sermons seem to have been built by the mile. There seems to be no earthly reason why the preacher should begin in one place rather than another, or why he should stop in one place rather than another. — *Henry Ward Beecher*

A Plea for a Clear, Convincing Word from the Church

The Sound of the Bugle

By Roy Pearson

HAVE you ever wondered, as I have wondered, why the church has not made a greater difference in our common life? Forget the rest of the world for a moment and think only about the United States of America. More than half of the people in this country belong to Christian churches. Presumably they are followers of Jesus Christ and presumably they have committed themselves to spread his gospel wherever they go. But have you read in the newspapers the gruesome record of murder and rape, of arson and robbery, of vandalism and assault? Have you shuddered at the stories of greed and hatred, of bigotry and vengeance, of treachery and falsehood? Have you found yourself disgusted as you glanced down the amusement pages and considered the level of culture they seemed to reveal? And then have you sometimes asked yourself why we Christians have not done more to remedy this awful situation, why so few could do so much in the first century and so many do so little in the 20th?

Paul suggests a large part of the answer in his first letter to the Corinthians. He is writing about speaking in tongues and he makes no attempt to put a stop to this strange, ecstatic, unintelligible babbling by which some of the Christians were expressing their excited devotion. "Speaking in tongues is all right," he says, "if you are addressing *God*. God can do all things: he can even understand speaking in tongues." But it was a wholly different matter when you were addressing other *men*. Then you were speaking not *to* God but *for* God, and you were simply wasting your time if you did not so speak that your hearers found your words both understandable and convincing. After all, says Paul, "if the bugle gives an indistinct sound, who will get ready for battle?"

Not many Christians speak in tongues any more, but how much of the church's bugle-playing is still indistinct! The call that seems to start as "Reveille" quickly changes to "Taps." Or just when we think we have identified the summons to "Charge!" we recognize instead the call to "Retreat!" Or the notes are so cracked, so confused and so faint that they make no sense at all to anxious Christians waiting for their call to duty.

I

Consider first what the church has to say about God. By this I mean the whole field of theology — God himself, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, pain, sin, faith, prayer, the life after death.

There is no denying the fact that some Christians are far more positive about these matters than they have a right to be. As Henry Drummond put it, "All religious truths are doubtable. There is no absolute proof for any one of them." And as Gordon W. Allport said, "The very comprehensiveness of the mature religious interest makes room for doubting. It is entirely possible for the mature person to be much less sure of his position than are many immature personalities who fashion blinders for their eyes, admitting nothing inconvenient."

But neither is there any denying that in many quarters today the church's bugle is giving such an indistinct sound that far from summoning men to battle, it merely puts them to sleep. Does God actually exist? Well, the church cannot be sure. Perhaps he does and perhaps he does not, but anyway it does no harm to worship as if he did when you can live the rest of your life as if he did not. Was Jesus the Son of God? Here again the church cannot be positive. He was a good man certainly, perhaps the best man who has ever lived, but when you speak about him as the Son of God, the church suspects that you are putting too much strain on common sense. The meaning of suffering? There really is none. Sin? The church would rather forget that word altogether. Faith? Not bad for women and children. Prayer? Worth a try if everything else has failed. Life after death? Nice thought but

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Why is the church not making a greater impact on the life of the world? In answering this ubiquitous question the author suggests three dominant notes which the church should be sounding. In each case the bugle-blowing of the church is slurred, faltering and indistinct. This call for clear, affirmative declarations of faith is directed to the whole church but especially to the pulpit.

you had better get all the pleasure you can out of your life on earth.

Some of the fault at this point is surely that of the church's ministers. The widening skies of modern knowledge have shown us the incredible immenseness and complexity of the world in which we live, and it has been a good thing for some of us ministers to be shaken out of our former complacency and compelled to face the vastness of our ignorance. But if we really mean it when we say that God is the Creator and Sustainer of everything that was and is and is to be, his revelation of himself in Jesus Christ has not been changed by modern knowledge and the vacillation of much contemporary preaching is an inexcusable detraction from the church's strength. The discoveries of science do not degrade God: they exalt him. The critical study of the Bible does not destroy its foundations: it reveals them. But too uncertain of their own faith to see its deeper implications and too unaware of scientific procedures to understand their limitations, many ministers have given forth such indistinct sounds on their bugles that on the brink of victory they have called their people to retreat.

But if some of the fault is that of the church's ministers, some of it also belongs to its laymen. I wonder how many of the church's laymen really believe much of anything, believe it enough to die for it, believe it enough to live for it. Do you believe, really believe, that God is not mocked and whatsoever a man sows he also reaps? Do you really believe that Jesus rose from the dead? Do you really believe that it is your calling as a Christian to seek God's Kingdom first, to deny yourself, to take up a cross, to love your enemies, to go the second mile and turn the other cheek? Do you really believe that God forgives sin and answers prayer, that the church is the body of Christ on the earth today and that the two greatest commandments are to love God with all of one's being and to love one's neighbor as oneself?

If you do not, there is no excuse in saying that faith is like love, that it is something which you either do have or do not, and that if you do not, you cannot do anything about it. For although we speak of love as something into which we *fall* and thereby imply that we ourselves have no control over the experience, is there not a deeper sense in which being in love is not even possible until years of loyalty and faithfulness have built at last the comradeship we claimed before we knew what we were claiming? And when we turn to faith, is not belief as much the fruit of life as life is the fruit of belief — the fruit of study and prayer, of fellowship and service, of trusting where we cannot fully see and then finally seeing where we have not fully trusted?

We cannot escape it, can we? One reason why the church has not made a greater impact on the life of the world is that the church's message is not clear when it speaks to the world about God. Too seldom do we Christians know for sure what we are talking about. Not knowing surely, we cannot believe strongly, and not believing strongly, what cause have we to think that our halting affirmations will send a righteous host to battle?

II

Second, turn to what the church has to say about man. By this I mean the province of ethics — right and wrong, good and bad, the purposes to which a human life may properly be given and the goals that none can seek without corruption.

Here again the church's bugle is making sounds that are less than distinct. When the bugle blares from the pulpit, the world could easily conclude that the church puts a very high value on man. Man is God's child, the bugle seems to be saying. God created him in his own image. He made him but little lower than the angels and he crowned him with glory and honor. He gave his only begotten Son for man's salvation, and you could name the most unattractive person in the world and still not name a man whom God did not love as if he were God's only concern.

But for every sound that the church's bugle makes in the pulpit, it makes a hundred other sounds in other places. It is bad enough when the calls from the pulpit are muddled, but it is even worse when the bugle splits its notes where the church spends most of its time — in home and factory, in office and school, in city hall and recreation center. Human life is priceless, we say, and when a Denver child falls ill of a strange disease, the planes take off from Boston with the doctors and the medicines to save it; but the Russians are expendable and the best brains in this country must be bound to building better intercontinental missiles. Human life is priceless, we say, and when two young men are trapped on a mountainside, skilled climbers drop their work and travel hundreds of miles to rescue them; but Negroes are different and they cannot be allowed to sit beside us in a restaurant or buy a house next door. Human life is priceless, we say, and when a woman murders her husband, the whole community is horrified; but "foreigners" are less important, and while millions of them face starvation, we spend about 15 per cent more money on cigarettes and other tobacco products than we give to charities for world relief.

When Christians pledge their whole lives to the Prince of Peace and 80 per cent of their national income to the gods of war, the church's bugle is giving an indistinct sound. When Christians send missionaries to colored peoples overseas and then refuse to let their converts worship with them in the homeland churches, the church's bugle is giving an indistinct sound. When Christians say

that Jesus was the Truth but still exclude his teachings from the education of their children, when they claim that they love their neighbor as themselves but still do their best to destroy him if he happens to be one of their business competitors, when they praise God as the Lord of all nations and peoples but still regard anything un-American as thereby un-Christian — the church's bugle is giving an indistinct sound.

Is there no tragedy in the fact that the line between Christians and non-Christians seems to be disappearing? One could rejoice if he felt that the leveling had been upward, that the world had been getting better and hence that the distance between Christ and the world had been growing smaller. But has not the leveling rather been downward? There are more church members in this country today than ever before, and why? Is it not largely because church membership is less difficult today, less dangerous, less embarrassing? Membership in the church is something we can take or leave alone, and whatever choice we make, we know that it will not greatly matter because we do not expect to make any great changes in the church nor to let the church make any great changes in us. Joining the church too frequently becomes not an enlistment for duty but a recognition of respectability, and the time is fast approaching when it will no longer be possible to speak of the church and the world as two separate entities because the church is so entangled with the world and the world is so entrenched in the church that when the church speaks to the world, it is only talking to itself.

We cannot escape it, can we? One reason why the church has not made a greater impact on the life of the world is its seeming duplicity when it speaks to the world about man. The church was meant to be a chosen people, a people summoned from the multitude, a people set apart for special proclamation and service. It was meant to prophesy. That is, it was meant to *speak for* God, to speak for him a word that else would not be spoken and to speak that word for him with singleminded and transforming power. But all too often when the church has spoken about man's life on the earth it has mumbled in its beard, and what cause have we to think that our halting affirmations will send a righteous host to battle?

III

This brings us to the third aspect of the problem, what the church has to say about itself. By this I mean the church's vision of itself — what justification the church offers for its own existence, what right the church claims it has to man's devotion.

It would not be unreasonable to expect that in this particular area there would be no confusion in the church and that the church's understanding of itself would be perfectly clear, but how the bugle notes are slurred! When I think about the testimony which so many of the churches bear to their conception of themselves, I find a multitude of pictures in my mind. I think about the literary critic Dr. Hugo Twelvetrees Turner of whom it was said that "he wanted to be all things to all men, that Turner was not only the proper, but the inevitable, name for him, that the corkscrew shaped his course, and that if he went around the corner he would run into himself on the way back." I think about the records of one of our midwestern cities which showed that in the preceding year the city's children had swallowed gunbore cleaner, soldering flux, reducing pills, battery acid, furniture polish, lighter fluid, airplane glue, fertilizer, narcotics, tranquilizers, rubbing alcohol, hormones, after-shave lotion, camphorated oil, motor oil, iodine, toilet cleaners, laundry bleach, chromium polish, gasoline, kerosene, benzene, paint, wood alcohol, linseed oil, varnish, paint thinner, pesticides, cologne, and toilet water.* I think about that delightful cartoon in *The New Yorker* which showed an oriental potentate sitting in royal splendor on a cushion in his palace, surrounded by dozens of the luscious ladies of his harem. But the great man is paying no attention to the beautiful women all around him: he is reading a magazine called *Playboy* which features *pictures* of beautiful women.

Let me explain what I have in mind. If you listen only to its words, the church seems to have a very high opinion of itself today. It might be reluctant to make the classic affirmation that anyone who does not have the church for his mother cannot have God for his father, but apparently it stands in no doubt about its inescapable importance in the total Christian life. Christians must belong to the church, it says. They must attend its services of worship. They must come to its congregational meetings. They must support its programs with their time and money. The church is a holy institution and every Christian must regard the church with reverence and serve it with faithfulness.

But consider how the church turns back on its own corkscrew and going around the corner, runs into itself on the way back. For what important tasks does this essential institution demand its members' loyalty? Church suppers where macaroni casseroles provide a prelude to a travelogue about the South Sea Islands? Card parties where women pass an afternoon in the verbal slaughter of their friends, pay $200 for the privilege and earn $10.13 for the church? Couples Clubs where crowds of gracious people gather for a Christmas dance and go away convinced that the town does not need a country club after all since the church takes care of their needs so nicely? Attendance records where the contribution of the soul is less important than the presence of the body? Building programs where

* *Time* magazine, June 16, 1958.

impressiveness is confused with sanctity and activity with service?

Do not misunderstand me. I am not speaking against church suppers or other social gatherings. I am not speaking against large congregations or new church buildings. But have not many of our churches become so eager to be all things to all men that they have swallowed a host of organizations and taken into themselves a multitude of activities that are no more appropriate to the life of a church than gunbore cleaner or soldering flux to the stomach of a child? Having all around them the possibility of actual spiritual fellowship, do not many of our churches confine their knowledge of that fellowship to what they read in books or what they hear from others' lips?

We cannot escape it, can we? One reason why the church has not made a greater impact on the life of the world is that the church's bugle gives such an indistinct sound when it speaks to the world about itself. The church is the body of Christ, it says: next Tuesday evening there will be an important meeting on table decorations. The church is the instrument of God's will, it says: at the next meeting of the Fireside Guild we shall have a fascinating talk on famous women golfers. The church is absolutely indispensable, it says: on the second Sunday in June the church will close until September. And if the church can do no better job than this in speaking of itself, what cause have we to think that its scrambled affirmations will send a righteous host to battle?

In his preface to *The Young Church in Action* J. B. Phillips says that the early disciples "did not make 'acts of faith,' they believed; they did not 'say their prayers,' they really prayed. They did not hold conferences on psychosomatic medicine, they simply healed the sick." I wonder: Is our failure to follow their example one of the reasons the church's bugle gives such an indistinct sound? And is this one of the reasons the church does not make a greater impact on the life of the world?

A Prayer

for better racial relations concerning the public schools

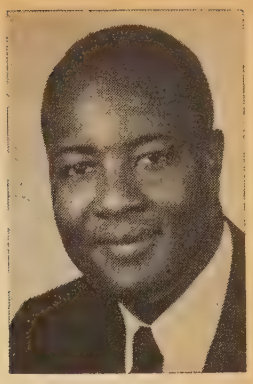
LET us thank God for the love which he has revealed in Christ for us: O God, who didst give Jesus Christ to the world to reveal thy love for every man, woman and child of the earth, we bless thy holy name. That thou dost love us and all human beings everywhere with a love that will never let go, even on a cross, we lift up our hearts in praise of thee.

Let us thank God for the country which we love: O God, who didst give us America with its matchless beauty and its magnificent resources, we bless thy holy name. Thou who didst move the American people to say in the Declaration of Independence that all men are created equal and that all are endowed by thee with such inalienable rights as life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, we lift up our hearts in praise of thee. Thou who didst lead the people of America to ordain the Constitution of the United States for the purpose of establishing justice, promoting the general welfare and securing the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, we lift up our hearts in praise of thee.

Let us confess our unworthiness in the light of God's goodness to us: O God, we have been unworthy of thy love; we have not been worthy of glorious America. We have not really believed in the Declaration of Independence; we have not really believed in our Constitution. We have often lived as if thou didst love only us. We have often lived as if America's benefits should come only to us. Good Lord, in thine understanding mercy, forgive us.

Let us pray for the children of our state: O God, a little child is the most precious gift that can come to a home. It is from thee that it comes. We know that thou dost expect us to prepare the child who comes to us in the best possible manner for the living of a full, rich, serviceable life. We know that thou wilt hold us blameworthy if we do not influence our children for good. We know that thou dost want us to open and keep open for them schools wherein they may be educated for thy service. Give us the intelligence, the heart, the power to do whatever is necessary to keep uninterrupted the sources of learning for our children. And grant that we may be willing to ask this not for our children alone but for the children of all men.

Let us pray for the world: O God, the Father of all men everywhere, we pray for thy whole family. Where there is dishonesty in the dealings of men with each other, grant that honesty may prevail. Where there is impurity that mars the lives of individuals and of groups, grant that purity may rule. Where there is selfishness that puts men, races and nations in ruinous conflict with each other, grant that unselfishness may motivate men's lives. Where hate disrupts the peace of homes, races, groups and nations, may love be enthroned. In the name of Him who was perfect Love made flesh before us, we pray. Amen. — *Nat Long, Druid Hills Methodist Church, Atlanta, Georgia.*



Doing as One Pleases

By Preston N. Williams

ONE of the irrepressible, if unpleasant, facts of our age is the widespread conviction that Americans are a people who are at best amoral, at worst immoral. No matter how filled with moralism the words of our politicians, the addresses of our educators, the propaganda of our mass media or the sermons of our popular preachers, foreigners and natives alike are constantly pointing to our more than adequate supply of national and personal sins and insinuating that we are not quite what we are supposed to be. Our self-righteous attitude toward Russia and communism is pricked by our idolization of our standard of living and our reluctance to make the sacrifices of money, time and personal ambition that are necessary to preserve a sane society and a free world. Our desire to link intellect with goodness is questioned by the standards of honesty existent upon our university campuses. Our public worship of and dedication to sincerity and integrity are made suspect by our failure to apply the public-relations image of ourselves to our own behavior as individuals, as a society or a nation. In spite of the professness of our moralism and the piety that characterizes its utterance, there appears to exist in our midst a moral deterioration which defies the best efforts of our admen and superpatriots, and which will remain as the label for our time.

Dean Robert E. Fitch of the Pacific School of Religion in an eloquent but devastating broadside has caught the impression that has been lodged firmly in the minds of many. "We today," the Dean writes, "live in an age when ethics is becoming obsolete. It is superseded by science, deleted by psychology, dismissed as emotive by philosophy; it is drowned in compassion, evaporates into aesthetics and retreats before relativism. The most dramatic proof of its irrelevance to our society is the fact that even the rebels against society disdain to appeal to it."* The dean's statement requires no comment. It suggests that our much-talked-about morality is a maudlin gesture announcing the replacement of ethics by "doing as one pleases."

What has been said by these many critics of American life is, I think, true. I do not care, therefore, to reargue the case or analyze again the situation. My desire is to suggest a cure, to risk the dangers of "how-toism" and seek to delineate a way from moral anarchy to moral clarity. Even if ethics is becoming obsolete, I believe it is not because men desire to exist without ethics but because men are truly confused about the nature and content of ethics. Our self-criticism of our national and personal morality is the result of a guilty conscience about the quality of our behavior and even if we cannot articulate it or strive consistently after it, we feel there must be some pattern of action better than the ones most conspicuously evident. People are motivated by things other than money and sex, charity is more than an empty act engineered by fund raisers, good is more than a synonym for "I like it." If ethics is decaying it is due to a genuine confusion concerning its nature and not to a consciously felt conviction that it is meaningless or has been transcended. Yet if this is true then our question is: "How can we become part of the answer rather than a part of the problem; how can we make our way out of the jungle of moral anarchy and actualize our desire for an ethic that corresponds with reality, the true and the good?"

The first step toward finding clarity in moral behavior comes when we discover that ethics is a problem of "being" and not "doing." Ethics deals primarily with the question, What shall I be, what convictions shall determine my character? and not, Shall I cheat on exams, engage in sexual promiscuity or rip pay telephones out of the booths in the

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This sermon argues that the whole Christian ethic is summed up in Augustine's daring maxim: "Love God and do as you please." This is a dictum which can be put to people without hazard only if it is clearly defined and properly modified. The author does both.

* Reprinted from the November 16, 1959 issue of *Christianity and Crisis*, a Christian Journal of Opinion, 537 West 121st St., New York 27, N. Y. ($5.00 per year).

dormitory? To put it another way, what a person does is determined by what he is, and what "is" is determined by his loyalties, interests and convictions. Tell me what a man truly believes and I will predict his behavior. The primary ethical question, therefore, is: "What are the loyalties, the interests, the convictions to which I should commit myself?" and not, "What ought I do?" Should one give his prime loyalty to his social group, to his emotional drives and urges, to a moral law that is objective and eternally there, to a God who is both love and truth? Ethical living demands the commitment of the self to a perspective, an objective norm that can serve as a basis for discriminative choice and it is our failure to think critically about this question of ethical norms that is responsible for our ambivalence and ambiguity.

Ethics, you know, is a communal enterprise. There is in the "this pleases me" and "I like it" both a "this" and a "me," an "I" and an "it." The attempt to make the "this" and the "it" a part of the "me" and the "I" is to deny the presence of the other whether it be another individual, another thing, a moral law or a God; it is to rob ethics of its meaning and worth, to make meaningful talk about right and wrong impossible. Ethics is not simply what choice shall I make between these alternative courses of action but also how do we form the man, mold the character of the individual who will make this choice. How do we cultivate our taste, preferences, values, so that they are capable of making genuine discriminations and are rooted in objective reality and reason?

Secret of the Ethical Life

It is because of this that Christianity has always stressed that the ethical life begins with the rebirth of the individual. By this it is meant that Christian living is not simply making right choices but is rather becoming the type of person whose orientation is established in the good and who, because of this, pleases only to choose the good. Christian living requires that the individual reorient his whole way of life, thought, being, around God in Christ and it affirms that only after this rebirth has taken place can one see clearly the moral dimensions of life.

Paul begins his quest for a solution by reference to the basic orientation of the Christian life — "but if one loves God," "yet for us there is one God." The first question is the question of one's being — where do you stand, what are your convictions.

The crucial nature of this inquiry is pointed up rather sharply by one of the heroes of the faith, St. Augustine, who summed up the whole of Christian ethics with the phrase: "Love God and do as you please." Now, Augustine was no fool. He was quite aware of the dangers inherent in this phrase. He lived in the Roman world when morally it was at its lowest ebb. Like Paul, most of his life as a Christian was spent attempting to preserve the gospel delivered to him; moreover, he himself knew from long personal experience the holding power of sin and the great difficulty encountered when one sought freedom from its grip. Yet he knew too that the secret of the ethical life was, what do you love, what is it that pleases you. He knew the words of his master: "For where your treasure is, there will be your heart also." Loving the right thing in the proper way is the secret of the good life. Love the right person, God, and clarity will replace confusion in your living. In addition you will receive a dynamic power through the Spirit which will render you capable of performing what you profess.

No King in Israel

There is a very cryptic verse in the book of Judges that sheds much illumination upon our present inquiry. "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes." This verse points dramatically to a period of moral and political anarchy in early Israel. It asserts that the final cause was man's lost vision of an objective referent of authority in his political and ethical life. To understand its full importance we need to realize that the king or judge in Israel was God himself and the man who played this role in Israel was a charismatic leader, that is, a leader who spoke for God by virtue of his peculiar endowment of God's Spirit. Now, when this voice, the voice of God, was silent, the writer states political and moral anarchy overcame the land.

Something like this is present in our midst today. God's voice is for many of us silent and this despite our confession of faith. We see ourselves enmeshed in the fabric of this world and the chains of casual necessity permit us only to choose among the various worldly or historical forces that affect us. We are creatures of our glands or nervous system, creatures molded by our society or ancestry and no freedom exists to transcend these forces. Trapped within them man is not free to select his own posture but is determined by the set of causes operative in his past and present or at the moment. We cannot do other than we do and what we do is fixed by the operation of glands, nervous system, society, ancestry.

Two important facts are left out of this picture of man. One is that it is simply descriptive, it is not prescriptive; it does not bind us but leaves us free to act as we please. It says here is John Jones: cheerful, aggressive, puritanical, American. It does not and cannot say this picture will forever be true for John Jones. The picture becomes determinative only if we accept it as final. But at this point another fact emerges, namely, that this picture is not the only picture of John Jones that exists. There are other pictures that exist, pictures which do not tend to obscure the freedom we possess. The

Christian view of man is such a picture. John Jones can see himself as a creature of a God who is great and good, who cares for him and sent his Son so that he, John Jones, might have abundant life in reconciliation and union with his fellow man; John Jones can see himself as a free, responsible person who is capable of receiving and living God's love. The two pictures are not mutually exclusive. The latter can embrace fully the first but it is only the latter that leads to a giving of meaning and direction to the ethical life. The former, to quote the Dean, does make ethics obsolete.

Now, when we as Christians speak about being reborn we mean that one accepts the latter picture of himself as being normative for his living. Such an act of acceptance is an act of faith from beginning to end. Belief in the real presence of God, trust and confidence in his goodness and mercy are necessary but among the rewards of such faith is a remaking of the self that brings with it clarity in one's moral living. When there is a "king, a God, in Israel" — your life — moral anarchy vanishes.

A Co-operative Venture

But how does one become a new creature? How is rebirth accomplished? The objective is obtained by two paradoxically opposite actions. Rebirth is at once an action of man and an action of God. Rebirth is your action, it comes when you have the desire and strength of will to make yourself over, to cease going on as you are, to reverse your direction in life and taking Jesus the Christ as your compass, walk in the direction of God the Father. Paul, Augustine, every Christian is of necessity engaged in a ceaseless struggle to rid himself of the conflict between love of God and love of that which is other than God. And yet while this effort is necessary and crucial it is not enough. We cannot simply remake ourselves by our own effort. The task thus is completed not by our doing but by God's. While we work God works. The new man is not simply a powerless picture, a fondly invented fiction. Behind it is a powerful and good Reality who fashions us into the new man we desire to be. We often joke about a wife's desire to remake her husband and the complete futility of her task. What we cannot joke about is a husband or a person's desire to remake himself in the image of the beloved and the contribution made to that recreation by the love of the beloved, which draws from the lover his highest and best and arms him with a strength not of his own making. Something akin to this takes place in our relation to God. God loves us powerfully enough to quicken and guide our action to completion.

Now my language has been symbolic, it is the language of myth and I do not pretend to know what all of it means but I do know that it points to a reality, and that countless men and women have experienced rebirth simply because they have accepted this image of themselves, and God in Christ has acted to aid them to achieve rebirth in their lives. This is the history of Christianity and people living in our midst testify to its actuality.

A word about moral clarity is needed. When I suggest that your ethical thinking will become clear when you are reborn I do not mean to suggest that all ethical problems will disappear. They will still be there and they will be as real as before and probably seem more serious. Paul's rebirth did not remove any of his problems. The problems are going to remain and you will have to choose. The moral clarity of which I speak is not new knowledge. Unfortunately my recommendations will not increase your supply of facts. You will still have to make choices while significant facts remain hidden, or dig into the several arts and sciences for more information. Neither is this clarity some sort of occult power, intuition or revelation that will enable you to mysteriously and consistently choose the good. Christians remain sinners as long as life lasts. No, it is not any of these. It is something less pretentious but more crucial and significant. It is the clarity that comes when you can get your sights focused properly upon the problem and the goal, when you can transcend the exigencies of the immediate situation and look at happenings in a wider and deeper perspective, when you love the proper things in the right way and when destructive inner conflicts and turmoil are minimized and you can devote yourself, willingly and thoroughly, in a practical and sustained way to the actualization of love of God and of the brethren. This moral clarity is the kindly light that leads us from the encircling gloom and darkness of moral obscurity into the light of goodness and truth.

SERMONS IN THE NEWS

ACCORDING to a Reuter's dispatch, thieves using an axe broke into a safe in the Methodist parsonage in Balmoral Crescent, a suburb of Melbourne, Australia. All they found was a sermon which the minister Rev. Alfred Bligh had prepared for the following Sunday. The title of the sermon — "Will a Man Rob God?" You can write this off as coincidental if you please; but it looks like a superb example of existential preaching with a vengeance. It is not often that we get the chance to preach to men caught "in the very act." To add insult to injury, however, the thieves left the sermon scattered on the floor; but even this offense — the final ingratitude — did not perturb Mr. Bligh. He offered a prayer for "the poor, misguided fellows."

A Christian under Capitalism

By Alan Walker

All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household. Philippians 4:22.

SHOULD a Christian pray for the overthrow of his government when that government is communist? This question was asked by an East German pastor of a renowned living theologian, Karl Barth. Dr. Barth gave an answer which surprised and even shocked many Christians round the world. He said, "The answer to the question depends on whether you can seriously and responsibly put such a plea to the Lord. Aren't you afraid that the prayer might be awfully answered, so that some morning you would wake up among those Egyptian 'flesh-pots' as one obligated to the 'American way of life'? Would it not be more fruitful to pray for rather than against your Government, and for the rest to beseech the Lord for light and strength to live and act in a genuinely Christian manner in the place where you find yourself?"

The answer given startled many not because of what it said about communism but what it inferred about capitalism and the whole Western way of life. For a quarter of a century we have had pressed upon us the difficulty of being a Christian under communism. Somehow we have almost forgotten that it is also hard to be a Christian under capitalism. The pressures are not as ruthless but they are more subtle. The materialism may not be as blatant but it is certainly penetrating. Dr. Barth recalls us to a central truth. It is difficult to be a Christian under any form of society the world has yet known; for every ordering of human affairs has been sub-Christian and provoked endless tensions between itself and vital, valid Christianity. So, many of us have been forced to think again of what it means to be a Christian under capitalism.

Christians since the very beginning of the church have been forced to live out their faith in an alien environment. In Paul's letter to the Philippians we have a glimpse of what occurred in the early days of Christianity. At the end of his letter to the Christians at Philippi Paul sends a greeting, saying, "All the saints salute you, especially those of Caesar's household."

It kindles the imagination to think of Christians bearing their witness in Caesar's household. Rome at that time was a city of want and waste and of senseless cruelty. Infanticide and abortion were common practices and marriage was as unstable as it is today. Soon, under Nero, to be known as a Christian was virtually to be labeled a criminal. In other words, it was intensely dangerous and difficult to be a Christian in Rome. Yet there brave men and women gave their witness in an alien environment. There is nothing new about Christians being obliged to bear their witness under such pressures as those found under communism or capitalism. Let me then ask the question, What does it mean to be a Christian in our form of society? How does a Christian express his discipleship under capitalism?

God's Approval

A Christian under capitalism first seeks God's approval rather than that of his society for the way he lives. Some practices permitted by the society in which the Christian lives will simply not be endorsed by a Christian conscience.

Capitalism is built on the profit motive. As Dr. Max Weber says, "Capitalism is the organization of free labor by the inducement of wages for the sake of profit." Long ago John Wesley stated that there are some things in the making of money which a Christian cannot do. Voluntarily a Christian abstains from making profit in some ways that the

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ALAN WALKER, *superintendent of the Central Methodist Mission in Sydney, Australia, is perhaps best known to Americans for his evangelistic crusade called "Mission to America" which he conducted for the General Board of Evangelism of the Methodist Church during 1956-57. Dr. Walker is an editorial associate of The Pulpit.*

To season this Declaration of Independence issue we are including a sermon by a native of a country which did not revolt against the motherland. The sermon, however, declares another kind of independence: the freedom of the Christian from primary obligation to any political or economic system. The rebukes to capitalism may fall harshly upon American ears in our time; but it is good to have the silence broken by such a criticism of a culture we now too largely take for granted.

The obvious dissimilarities between the uses of the Christian ethic made by this sermon and by the first sermon in this issue may be taken as evidence that we require no uniformity of theological view in selecting sermons.

society around him may allow. In his famous sermon on the use of money John Wesley declares, "We may not sell anything that impairs health, such as spirituous liquors. All who sell them are poisoners general. They murder His Majesty's subjects wholesale. They drive them to hell, like sheep." A Christian cannot seek or accept profits through undertakings which hurt or exploit his neighbors. Each man today must make his own list of sources from which he cannot accept gain. For me, knowing the effect of liquor on the lives and hopes of the people, I could have nothing to do with the brewing or selling of alcohol. Before accepting income from rubber plantations in New Guinea or tin mines in Malaya or sugar fields in Fiji, I would want to be assured that a just wage is being paid to native workers. With war now meaning atomic war, how can I as a Christian accept the "dividends of death" that come from an armaments company?

There is so much that falls short of Christian standards in our Western way of life. How shoddy so much of our commerce appears when measured beside the standards of the Kingdom of God. Around us are the false values of materialism and wastefulness built up by all too often unscrupulous methods of advertising. The blatant exploitation of sex, the frank appeals to greed and acquisitiveness and to outdo a neighbor in the parade of wealth, the whole sorry penetration of the community by materialism — these pressures a Christian must resist. He knows that a pattern and style of life have developed which at many points would not bear Christian analysis and judgment. Humbly he looks to his God for approval in the ways he makes and spends his money. He hears the challenge of a better way. He accepts the challenge of Paul's greeting, "All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household."

Social Solidarity

A Christian under capitalism seeks solidarity with his fellows. He hears the probing definition as expressed by Dean W. R. Mathews, "A Christian is a man who finds privilege unbearable." There are few more serious indictments of the economic structure of capitalism than that it divides man from man and separates group from group. Capitalism can drive a wedge between people. Always under capitalism there have been owners and workers and often such division has meant bitterness. There have been patterns of inequality which are an offence to Christian brotherhood. In every society where capitalism operates the isolation and the insulation of man can be seen. In Mexico great wealth and unbelievable poverty exist side by side. In America contrast the fabulous wealth of Fifth Avenue with the squalor of Harlem barely a few miles away.

There is a strain of thought running through the teachings of Jesus and the New Testament which has remained undeveloped by Protestantism. For four centuries since the Reformation all effort has been directed at drawing the individual to his feet, giving him identity and integrity before God and among his fellows. Historically this was a battle that had to be won and Protestantism has fashioned a glorious heritage of individual freedom. Yet in seeing each man in his separateness, sometimes the sense of his oneness with his fellows has been lost. But human solidarity was a Christian expression before it was a communist one. Having won freedom for individual men and women, the time has come for the Christian faith to weave each individual life into the lives of its fellows. Jesus was concerned with this need. After all, he did teach his disciples to say, "Our Father — not My Father — which art in Heaven." Paul is very conscious of the need for unity. He delighted to talk about Christians being "members one of another." He saw each man identified with those around him. Listen to these words: "When one member suffers, all suffer with it, when one is honoured, all rejoice with it. . . ."

There are Christians who have seen the meaning of this solidarity of man with man. Kagawa, the late Japanese Christian leader, saw it when he felt he must live in the slums of Tokyo, choosing a room as small and dirty as the people around him. Dr. Schweitzer saw it when he plunged from the privileges of Europe to the underprivilege of primitive people in Africa. Dr. George McLeod has seen it when he talks of Christians accepting no more than the national average in income. Members of the East Harlem Protestant Parish have seen it when they have gone to live in the squalid tenements among the people they would serve on Manhattan Island in New York. Many a humble pastor and missionary have seen the vision when they have accepted a life of identification with people whom they would win to Christ.

I once knew a humble Christian businessman in an Australian town who knew what Christian solidarity meant under capitalism. He had a boot-repairing business and his shop happened to be in the most favored location in the town. Because of it his business flourished. The day came, however, when he felt he must set his own voluntary ceiling on the amount of work he would accept. He argued simply that there was only a certain number of shoes to be repaired in that town. If he obtained more than his share, the several rival boot-repairing shops in the town must find existence difficult. It was in the days of economic depression and he knew what that could mean. So he mended the number of shoes each week that he could accept for repairing. He fixed this number at a point which would allow him to pay his workmen and to receive a reasonable profit. When, in any week, that figure was reached he would say

to his next customer, "I would like you to go down the street to a shop you will find nearer the corner. I have my share of customers for this week. I think it is my Christian duty not to take any more for I will be robbing my fellows who likewise must care for their families in this town." I take off my hat to that humble Christian. Had Paul known him, I think he could have given his greeting: "All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household."

Changing an Economic System

A Christian living under capitalism must work to remove injustices and inequalities and ever to carry his system nearer to the pattern of the Kingdom of God. Such is the obligation of any man who lives under a system that is less than fully Christian. Something quite serious has been happening in every Western land since World War I. It is the dying of criticism. The main reason for this silence has been, of course, the power and challenge of Russian communism. A rightful fear of communism has made criticism of its chief antagonist, capitalism, very difficult. Dread of communism has had a strange consequence: By inference it has thrown a cloak of righteousness over capitalism. It is a garment capitalism has no justification in wearing. But the denial of human values, the eclipse of certain freedoms in Russia have made all reforms suspect. So it can be said the revolution of Russia has restricted the evolution of western lands. The time has come to take up vigorously again the task of social criticism and reform in these lands. In spite of great advances, too many injustices and inequalities remain in capitalism.

Capitalism wherever it operates still is heavily weighted in favor of those with resources and wealth. People with money find it relatively easy to make more money. People with nothing but their labor to sell spend a lifetime trying to make ends meet and to pay off the little home which they yearn to call their own. The whole Western world needs to recover the concept which the church once called the "just price." Throughout the Middle Ages a "just price" was that which was permitted after a covering of cost and the addition of a reasonable but limited profit margin. For centuries the "just price" was a barrier against uncontrolled exploitation.

Overcoming Avarice

A Christian under capitalism seeks power from God to overcome its pressures and to live the kind of life that the New Testament describes by the word *saint*. Every form of society contains its own peculiar moral and spiritual temptations. The besetting sin of capitalism is avarice, regarded by the church as the second of the seven deadly sins. Capitalism, because of its emphasis on profit and material comfort and its setting of man over against man in competitive life, provokes envy and stimulates avarice. Hence in the western world love of money and all it can buy has created a materialism which threatens the spiritual life of every man who lives within its influence. A Christian under capitalism must find an answer to the peril of avarice.

There is no doubt that Jesus looked upon love of money as a serious danger to human welfare. He spoke about it constantly. Several times he warned against covetousness. In one of his well-known parables he declared that the life of the spirit is choked by riches. One of the few non-biblical words of Jesus that have come down to us refers to the temptations of wealth. In this warning Jesus is supposed to have said, "Whoso craves wealth is like a man who drinks sea water; the more he drinks the more he increases his thirst and he ceases not to drink until he perishes." Perhaps the most vivid of Christ's warnings concerning covetousness and the love of money is his stark challenge, "You cannot serve God and mammon."

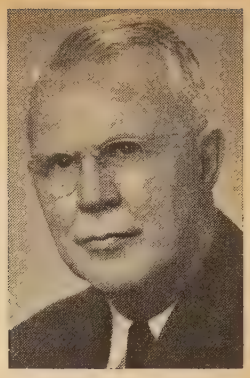
The Bible claims that almsgiving — the generous gift offered in answer to human need — breaks the hold money has on our hearts. Every community, every home, every person needs freely to give to the religious and charitable causes that arise from time to time. Generous benefactions help to drive back the grey waters of materialism which always threaten to engulf society. All of us need to break the spell that wealth or love of money casts over us by giving to God and to those in need. In some strange way such cutting away of the thing we love from our being and the giving of it to someone else without expectation of reward sets the soul that does it free.

The power which comes from God through worship and prayer is needed to deliver us from personal avarice. We need to walk with God constantly if we are to escape the corruptions which accompany capitalism. The perils should constantly drive us to God. The acceptance of a supreme loyalty to him is our final protection. It is only as we are prepared to declare our loyalty to God and our obedience to Jesus Christ that the power of mammon in our own hearts is defeated.

John Wesley earned great sums of money but at the end of his life he possessed little. In speaking of his possessions he said simply, "I have two silver spoons at London and two at Bristol." Apparently these spoons were all he possessed. Just before his death he made this simple entry in his diary: "For upwards of 80 years I have kept my accounts exactly. I will not attempt it any longer, being satisfied with the continual conviction that I save all I can and give all I can — that is all I have."

That is all I have! By constant generosity and by living near to God John Wesley had overcome the love of money and had walked unscathed through a capitalist environment. He shows us how a Christian lives under capitalism.

A Religious Justification Of Our Political Existence



God in the Declaration Of Independence

By Vere V. Loper

THE Declaration of Independence includes four references to God. Some of them may have come from the revision of the original Jefferson manuscript by the Continental Congress, but they are consistent with Jefferson's interpretation of God. The entire document is of profound religious importance in passages where God is not mentioned. We shall center our thought on these four references and apply them to our own time.

God of Nature

The first reference is to nature's God: "When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people . . . to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them. . . ." The first great question was, Is there a place for us in this world? The basic question which these three million former subjects of England needed to ask as they looked forward to their separate existence as a nation was whether this new nation would be of sufficient importance to deserve a place among other nations. Our fathers asked this question in terms of the justification of our existence in the total scheme of the world. As justification they might have set forth the growing population, the great unoccupied territory on the continent beyond them, the limitless natural resources, the inability of European governments to function at so great a distance, and many other good reasons to justify a new nation on a new continent. They did continue in the Declaration to outline their many grievances against the king as one basis of their rebellion. They did mention that they had appealed to the "native justice and magnanimity of the British people, only to be rebuffed." But all of this came after they had firmly set forth the primary grounds on which they justified their existence.

This was no less than their conviction that "the laws of nature and nature's God" had provided for them a "separate and equal station" among the nations of the world. In short, they were convinced that they were justified in their existence because God himself had provided a place for them.

Their convictions at this point were an outgrowth of the science and philosophy of their day as well as of their religion. The word "nature" implied much more in that day than it does for us. Basically we identify nature with the physical, tangible aspects of the universe which are the subjects of study in physical sciences. We need an understanding which that generation had of the teachings of Hume, Newton and Locke to realize all that was implied in the phrase "nature and nature's God." To them nature meant the totality of reality beyond the bounds of the physical. Newton was busy discovering the law of gravitation. He thought of this law as a part of the law of God. Scientific progress was then rightly conceived as new areas in which God's method of procedure was discovered. Religion was not decreased but increased by scientific progress. Newton believed that the realities with which science dealt existed only by the design of God.

It was such thinking that Jefferson applied to our nation in his reference to "laws of nature and nature's God." The affirmation is clear: We the people of these United States are in the plan of God. There is a place for us. We are as much a part of his design as oak trees, mountains, rivers and oceans. We are justified in taking our place among the nations because nature's God designed it explicitly for us. Any other justification for the nation is minor or incidental. We exist within the

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The use of the Declaration of Independence as the text for this sermon provides an effective outline for a message which exalts God as the sovereign creator, judge and protector of the new nation formed on these shores 184 years ago. We have here a topical sermon which is biblically rooted without benefit of scriptural text.

total scheme of nature. We shall survive because God intended that we should.

This conviction became basic to our nation. We have been led by men like Abraham Lincoln who believed profoundly that our nation had a mission to fulfill under God. He was kept steady in his most discouraging moments by his conviction that God had a work for us to fulfill. The American dream is that we shall provide a haven for the oppressed peoples of the world. We have not done so well recently. We need to recapture the ideal of the signers of the Declaration of Independence that we are not in this world to insure our own survival. We are here by the will of God and designed to fulfill his purposes. This was the reason for our launching. It is the best reason for our continuance.

Speaking in Independence Hall where the Declaration was adopted and signed, Woodrow Wilson said in 1914, "Our independence is a fact so stupendous that it can be measured only by the size, the energy, and variety and wealth and power of one of the greatest nations of the world. But it is one thing to be independent and it is another thing to know what to do with independence." Then he pleaded with us to use our place, our power to be a blessing to the world. So today with the place which we believe God has given us, we need to search his will anew that we shall know what he wants for us in the world of nations today.

God as Creator

The second reference to God in the Declaration follows logically from the first: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among them are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights governments are instituted among men." God is seen now in his role as Creator, but not as the maker of heaven and earth, plants, animals and men. God is rather engaged in bringing into being that which lies beyond the realm of the physical. His creativity is exercised in the origin of the highest values. He is creating a relationship of essential equality between all of his children. He is giving men rights which belong to them as men. They are to be endowed with the precious intangibles of life; they are to be free men. They are to have the high privilege of seeking that which will give them true happiness.

Our freedom was a gift of the creative power of God before it was associated with the endeavors of men. These rights, moreover, are so precious that governments have the central responsibility to see that they are given to men. When governments fail to recognize and to insure these rights to men, they have outlived their usefulness. It is then time for a new order. The people have a right to alter, abolish or institute new governments.

Jefferson believed in the common man. He was wholly Christian in his concept of common people because he believed God himself had given dignity to his people in their essential equality. He expressed the faith of his country that all people had the essential right under God to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. He was the advocate who was mainly responsible for writing the first ten Amendments, known as the Bill of Rights, into our Constitution. If he had been able to win his point, a statement would have been included in the Declaration of Independence that would have outlawed slavery from the first days of our national existence. Nevertheless, the Declaration of Independence did set the stage for the eventual elimination of slavery.

The time came when Lincoln led the nation in the fulfillment for the Negro of the rights which God intended for him as a human being. When that time came Lincoln knew where he would find the charter of the nation on which he was to free the slaves. Standing in Independence Hall he said, "You have kindly suggested to me that in my hands is the task of restoring peace to our distracted country. I say in return, sir, that all the political sentiments I entertain have been drawn, so far as I am able to draw them, from the sentiments which originated in and were given to the world from this Hall. I have never had a feeling politically, that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence." So the philosophy which justified the origin of our country became the guiding political philosophy of the president who did the most to use government to secure for men the equality and dignity which God intended for them.

When we seek the ultimate source of this philosophy of the dignity of man, we find it in Him who said, "In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Our government came into being for a variety of reasons. A minor cause was the abuses which we suffered. But such reasons have long since been forgotten by all except a few recent immigrants who bring an anti-British sentiment with them. Basically the American people have come to think of the British people as their greatest allies in the maintenance of a free world. And in those earliest days their revolt was due to the fact that they had learned to love freedom as Englishmen. It was a continuing and an increased devotion to human dignity which was affirmed in the Declaration of Independence. We became a nation which believed in the common man and felt that our government was charged to see that he kept his liberties. Ralph Barton Perry, the Harvard philosopher, claims that "Philanthropy was the original ingredient of the democracy of the Declaration. The individual concern for his fellow man, for the

amelioration of the condition of the relatively unfortunate and for the development of the community of God is a deeper motive in democracy than the ambition or the discontent which the individual feels on his own behalf."

God as Judge

The third reference to God in the Declaration is as "Supreme Judge": "We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions . . . do . . . solemnly declare that [we] are free and independent States." While they were issuing their Declaration of Independence to Great Britain and to all the nations of the world, the Founding Fathers wanted to make it clear that they were not to be tried in the courts of men. They made their ultimate appeal to God. They did not appeal to the force of arms by which they might free themselves. They did not appeal to the British people to give them liberty. They were not prepared to be judged by the other nations of the world in their bid for freedom.

On the very first day of our declared independence, we boldly took ourselves to the throne of God. The religion of those men was not as orthodox as the majority of their compatriots and as many of us might desire, but they knew that God was a judge. They saw in him what we currently call the Lord of History. They felt that his will would ultimately be done in the fate of nations and of men. They went at once to his Sovereign Presence to be condemned or justified in what they purposed to do in the establishment of this sovereign state.

They did not count themselves blameless in the sight of God. They were breaking old ties which were precious to them. They were leaving the national tradition to which they had been devoted. They were bringing suffering upon many who loved them. Much of their fighting had been against mercenary troops, but they might find it necessary to kill those who had been their countrymen. They were disobeying laws which they had been trained to respect and obey. They were conscious of widespread and bitter criticism visited upon them. They felt guilty. But they believed that their basic course of action was wise and necessary. They had confidence in the righteousness of their cause. They came, therefore, boldly to God that he might be the judge of whether they were following high ideals and proceeding in moral rectitude. They sought to make their enterprise morally right from the very beginning. They were prepared to take whatever condemnation the world might visit upon them. They asked only that God judge them.

Here again the appeal is to the nature of the universe itself much more than to the personal grievances and desires. They looked to God as judge to maintain the moral constitution of the universe. They were looking for no celestial pat on the back. They wanted rather to make sure that they moved in harmony with him whose will is done in an orderly universe. They had only one fear and it was not British troops. It was God. They were in awe before the moral Judge of men. They did not care to wait for his final day of judgment but asked that God be their judge on the day of their declared freedom.

God as our judge continues to be a primary thought of reverent men. We have felt the power of his condemnation in the suffering which we brought on ourselves and others. But we have even more frequently had the feeling of the men of '76 that the Supreme Judge of the universe approved at least of what we were endeavoring to be and do as a nation.

God as Protector

The fourth reference to God in the Declaration is to him as Protector: "and for support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

The danger to which these men were subjecting themselves is far beyond our power to understand. They were subject to all the dangers of war. The shot at Concord and Lexington heard round the world had launched a war already in progress. Many had died. Others would die, their sons, their families, perhaps themselves. Many had considerable property and knew that in defeat it would be confiscated or destroyed. They might well be stripped of everything they possessed, even life. For if they lost the war, they were not just a defeated army. They were traitors subject to execution. Many men in a similar position today are executed.

I had forgotten that it was to this situation that we owed the now somewhat hackneyed comment of Benjamin Franklin: "We must all hang together or we shall all hang separately." Benjamin Harrison joked and yet knew it was no joke when he said to Elbridge Gerry, "It will be over with me in a minute, but you will be kicking in the air a half-hour after I am gone."

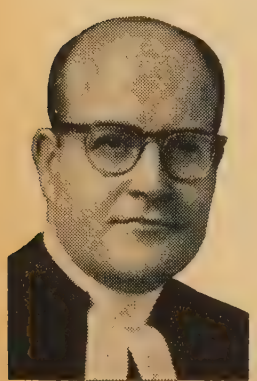
At the moment when they signed the Declaration of Independence, their troops were outnumbered four to one. Between the fourth of July when the Declaration was passed and the time when the copies were ready to be signed, our armies suffered a defeat which was almost disaster. Yet these men signed the Declaration without hesitation, seeing its last words as they signed — "with a firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence."

They believed in the protection of divine provi-

dence. They had faith that God was involved in their enterprise. They believed that they could depend upon him to protect the new nation which they were launching. Jefferson used a seal on his private stationery on which appeared this motto: "Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God." The Founding Fathers believed they rebelled against tyrants; and in so doing were obedient to God.

Perhaps they were naive and unrealistic in their faith. Perhaps they were the sentimental liberals of their day who had a foolish belief in the possibility of progress. Who can say? At any rate the nation came through. The Constitution was written and the general of the former day was the president of the new day. In his First Inaugural Address he said, "It would be peculiarly improper to omit, in this first official act, my fervent supplication to that Almighty Being, who rules over the universe. . . . No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the invisible hand which conducts the affairs of men more than the people of the United States. Every step by which they had advanced to the character of an independent nation seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency."

Many times as we look back on the dark days of the Revolutionary War and try to understand how a handful of people could win their freedom from a world empire, it does seem as though God was our Protector, knowing we should serve some useful purpose in the world. Many times as we look back to the tragic days of the Civil War when it seemed our nation would be split asunder, we have a deeper understanding of the sad man who said that he was driven to his knees by the conviction that he had no other place to go. Surely God's hand has been upon us. And so we come to our day. May we look to God as our sovereign Creator, Judge, and Protector and even more to our capacity to be an instrument in his hands.



The Original Declaration Of Human Freedom

Big Enough for Freedom

By Donald Macleod

Brethren, you were called to be free; only do not make your freedom an opening for the flesh. . . . Now those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its emotions and passions.
Galatians 5:13, 24

A FOREIGN student, asked if she would like to remain in America, gave this reply, "America is indeed a wonderful land in which to live. I should like the advantages of your way of living, but I'm afraid I am not a big enough person to live in such liberty." Does the idea ever strike *us* that the privilege of freedom demands moral responsibility greater than we are able to match by ourselves? We have no hesitation in asking whether some underprivileged nations in Asia or Africa are ready for liberty and independence, but we shrink from inquiring whether we ourselves are big enough for freedom.

Not one of us can begin to be big enough for freedom until he knows and takes seriously the fact that freedom has a double implication: It means freedom *from* something and freedom *for* something. It involves two questions as Leslie Cooke points out, "Liberty, what from? Liberty, what for?" Like a storage battery freedom has negative and positive poles, and what it can be and what it can do depend upon our taking both of these into account.

In the 17th century a sailing vessel with two hundred Negroes under the decks was on its way from Africa when the slaves broke free, subdued the crew and tossed them overboard. Now they were free — so they thought! Suddenly they found themselves in real trouble; they soon discovered that not one of them could sail the ship. They were not big enough for their newly-found freedom. They rejoiced momentarily over their success in

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In this sermon the national theme of this season of the year, the declaration of freedom, is returned to its personal, spiritual and biblical depths. A declaration of national independence which does not rest upon the spiritual freedom of its individual citizens deteriorates speedily into political, moral or social tyranny.

realizing "freedom from," which required no special moral or intellectual ingenuity on their part; but they could not cope with "freedom for what." And frequently modern society has found itself in the same awkward and dangerous predicament. In our frenzy to be free we have failed to notice that the most important issue is: What does our possession of freedom imply and entail? Our inability to answer this question has created some serious problems in contemporary society.

What Freedom Is Not

Some people, for example, turn to society with a truculent attitude and say: "Feed us!" Unconsciously they have become enslaved by an attitude of dependence. "The state owes us a living," they declare, "therefore the government should look after us." They misinterpret democratic freedom as being freedom from all responsibility, which leads easily to another form of tyranny — complete dependence. The driving spirit of the rugged pioneer leaves them and is replaced by a moral and intellectual flabbiness that wants successful careers given to them ready-made, the abundant life with all its ingredients ready-mixed, and by the flick of a switch to have handed to them a packaged solution for every problem.

Another group is caught by the easy and yet compressing tendency to conform. They live by one standard and are ruled by one slogan: "Everybody is doing it." Their greatest fear is that they may be caught out of step with the crowd. This type appears in popular plays and in the best-sellers, *The Hidden Persuaders, The Status Seekers* or *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit.* They are victims of the status quo, they shun individuality. They adjust to the framework of the times, and none of them ever takes a radical step toward those higher principles that give distinction to personality and singularity to conduct. As Henry Hitt Crane once said, "The fad flogs them into conformity."

Still another group includes that vast cross section of everyday men and women who are satisfied with mediocre levels of work, recreation and thinking. I am told that in some of our high schools teen-age boys and girls no longer dare to excel because they may be singled out for ridicule or contempt by their fellows. They are under popular pressure to produce only what is ordinary; for, after all, who wants to be labeled "a greasy grind" or "a square"? There are workmen who would like to do an honest day's work but who are under pressure to produce less and less work for more and more pay. Pride of work and satisfaction in individual creativity appear to be on the way out.

What I have said thus far points up the fact that our freedom is in a state of danger and uncertainty and will continue to be until we learn what true freedom is and what it is for. Elton Trueblood has said that "without some moral or spiritual illumination freedom can be a great deceiver." This is what happened after the French Revolution. The tyranny of the aristocratic class was exchanged for the despotism of Napoleon. In Russia slavery under the Czars was replaced by the nightmare of Stalin's police state. In each case simple people obtained their freedom by any method available, but they did not know that the means by which they got it could usher in other tyrannies equally terrible. They did not realize that freedom is basically moral and spiritual and that no one can be sure of it until all have God's kind of freedom. Paul, writing to the church at Galatia said, "Brethren, you were called to be free; only do not make your freedom an opening for the flesh. . . . Now those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its emotions and passions."

As Christian men and women we have been offered true freedom: Christ can liberate us from the aching burden of remorse over the past, from the harsh requirements of living by human laws and social protocol and from the gnawing oppression of doubt and meaninglessness and death. But he does this not simply for you and me to have our fling, so to speak; it is for a purpose. Biblical freedom is never an end in itself; it is a means; it provides the opportunity for higher spiritual development. Freedom in the biblical sense means that we are free to become what God wants us to be. And therefore only that person whose life is redeemed and whose powers are controlled by his fixed allegiance to Someone better and nobler than himself, only he is big enough for freedom. Only then does freedom become like Tennyson's "altar stairs that slope through darkness up to God."

Requisites of Liberty

True freedom must begin then with an inward personal experience. St. Paul said, "You were called to be free." He does not say that freedom is handed to us unconditionally and is therefore something to be taken for granted or boasted about as one of our rights. When a man is called to any position in life, he must have some inner qualification or potential that fits him for it. Similarly with freedom, said John Milton: "Liberty is to be sought from within rather than from without." This means that we may live in a free democratic country, fortified by what we glibly call our rights, but may remain enslaved as long as we are inwardly absorbed by our possessions, our deep-seated prejudices and our untamed desires. A well-ordered political government is of no great advantage unless you and I have free personal government. Indeed the hardest sight on earth is Paul's picture of his own inner enslavement: "I can will what is right but I cannot do it . . . wretched man that I am!" Or the modern businessman who cried out in sheer exasperation, "What am I fighting? I'm fight-

ing myself, I guess. This life which keeps me running after things that really don't matter. I'm right in the thick of thin things and I know it! That's the terror of it. But what can I do? I know better, and do the worse for it."

Freedom from this slavery does not come from any moral revolution we can engineer by ourselves. It happens when that Person, that Savior of men, comes into our lives and we experience a new relationship with God. This is the key to freedom. This is the secret of the liberated personality. For this kind of freedom Christ has set us free. And every one of us can be big enough for it if we learn to know the love of God in Christ and commit ourselves to the service of his Kingdom. And this will be possible only if we believe and trust the love of God, believe that he wants to catch us up into his love so that we may know the marvelous freedom of his children. This is the beginning of freedom and it can happen only within ourselves. A woman who had been set free by such an experience of the love of God said, "Now all beauty is more beautiful, and all truth more interesting. All people seem to be more lovable, and the whole world a different place."

The Paradox of True Freedom

True freedom works only through moral obedience. In the early days of the Russian Revolution, after the czar had abdicated, a stout old lady was seen walking down the center of one of the busiest streets in Petrograd. A policeman advised her that she was confusing the traffic and putting herself in danger and that the sidewalk was for pedestrians, but she shouted back at him, "I'm going to walk where I please; we've got freedom now." This simple incident suggests what our misconception of the meaning of freedom can be. Charles Kingsley once said, "There are but two freedoms: the false, where a man is free to do what he likes; the true, where a man is free to do what he ought." Freedom to do what we like is merely the prelude to some type of moral deterioration over which some evil force, some dark tyrant, will inevitably assume control. "You are called to be free," said Paul, "only do not make your freedom an opening for the flesh." The Prodigal won his freedom to do as he liked but he landed in slavery to swine. But freedom to be what we ought is what Jesus brings. And through this freedom we and all who acknowledge their moral impotence before him are at liberty to be ourselves, the selves God intended us to be.

But none of this comes automatically or is guaranteed to remain as a matter of course. It requires obedience. It must be exercised within the framework of a loyalty. And no man is more free than when his allegiance is given to the very highest he knows, namely, the Lord of Life. Look at it this way: we must obey the laws of health if our bodies are to be free from disease. We must obey the laws of nature if we are to have order and safety in our common life. We are most free, for example, when we obey the speed limit or the law of gravitation. And similarly in moral living, but with this difference: Christ does not set up rules or laws; he brings the issue from outward regulations to an inward relationship, to a sense of belonging, to a matter of personal loyalty. We are truly free when we are mastered by him who alone is worthy of our loyalty. "If the Son shall make you free," said John, "then you shall be free indeed." Or as George Matheson sang, "Make me a captive, Lord, And then I shall be free." And this in turn echoes the saying of Augustine: "Love God, and do what you like." It is the life that is bound in loyalty and obedience to Christ that knows what it really means to be free.

True freedom is guaranteed only when men are big enough to meet the cost. John Curran, the Irish judge and orator of the 18th century, declared that "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." This is true as far as it goes. But freedom cannot be guaranteed by vigilance alone; it is a by-product of a spiritual loyalty to Him who is the source of all truth and goodness. Every loyalty exacts a claim; and this is more than a matter of being on guard for, after all, even the animals can stand watch. "You were called to be free," writes Paul, "only do not make your freedom an opening for the flesh. . . . Now those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its emotions and passions." This means that the self must be subdued with all its ambitions, appetites and frantic grasping. And how little do we want this! We see ourselves in this little piece of doggerel verse:

> There was a little maiden once
> Who lived in days gone by,
> Whose every thought and every word
> Always began with "I."
> I think, I know, I wish, I say,
> I like, I want, I will;
> From morn to night, from day to day,
> "I" was her burden still.*

"All self-centeredness is slavery," says Werner Pelz. Freedom demands a showdown with self and in this tremendous encounter "self must go, and you and I must execute the sentence" (Albert E. Day). And the only way to do this is to be embraced by the will of God and to serve it as our highest ambition and desire. Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." The worship of self must give way to the religion of the cross which means dying to self in order to live in freedom. Samuel Rutherford, the saintly Scot, knew that the price of freedom was to accept the way of the cross: "He that will take that crabbit tree and carry it cannily will yet find it to be such a burden as wings are to a bird and sails to a boat." This is a picture of true freedom. Are we big enough to pay for it?

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* Quoted by Charles M. Hepburn in *The Expository Times*, LVIII, page 183.

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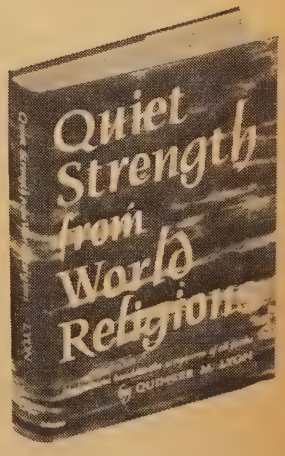

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By Robert A. Thomas

IT WAS clear to us when we were students in divinity school that most of the men needed some opportunity to identify themselves with the church without having to assume too much responsibility. They needed to know firsthand what churches do and how ministers work. Our experience up to that time was generally limited to one home church with its succession of ministers and perhaps two or three student churches in rural areas during college days. Few of us had had any opportunity to get close to an effective minister or to see a normal church from the "inside." We were critical enough of the church but mostly for the wrong reasons; and the faculty was not much help at this point.

During the last fifteen years of observing young men coming from the seminaries, both denominational and ecumenical, into the work of the pastorate I have wished again and again for some better system of education, some more effective preparation for the ministry. False starts and unhappy experiences could be avoided; disillusionment is unnecessary. Moreover, something has to be done to awaken the churches to their responsibility for training a ministry. Churchmen have been quick enough to criticize the seminaries for what they do or do not, but are unaware of the problems and of their own responsibility.

Adding a year of internship to the B.D. program meets all three of these problems: (1) It does not diminish the vastly significant emphasis of a university on the development of the student's intellectual life, his confrontation with the theological problems, his wrestling with ideas; (2) it provides him with the opportunity to identify himself with the church and, because of a supporting financial program, gives him a certain freedom from responsibility which is desirable for effective observation and evaluation; and (3) it forces the church to become aware of the problem of theological education and the church's responsibility for helping make it more adequate.

ROBERT A. THOMAS *is minister of First Christian Church, St. Joseph, Missouri. Prior to his present call, he held pastorates in Chicago and Maywood, Illinois. He is a graduate of Drury College and the Divinity School of the University of Chicago.*

Many of our seminaries are wrestling with the problems involved in the practical training of the ministerial student. This article is a report from one minister who served as supervisor of a student-intern sent to his church by the Federated Theological Faculty of the University of Chicago.

Goals for the Year

A successful internship ought to do the following: provide a setting in which the student can work out answers to questions he brings with him; give the student an opportunity to observe a congregation in its local functioning, its denominational connections and its ecumenical relationships, with the time and freedom to make judgments about his possible relationship to such a church; bring the student face to face with a great variety of life-problems so as to make it possible and necessary to ask their meaning, examine the church's ministry in these situations and project in his imagination an ideal ministry; acquaint the student with some of the practical machinery of institutional life; provide a link between the divinity school and the church; give the student a chance to try his wings by preaching from time to time, teaching in the church school, working on committees in both church and community life, visiting the sick, conducting his own educational experiments, etc., all under the watchful eye of the supervisor and without his having to take undue responsibility; provide much of the most stimulating and useful raw material for the fourth year of the B.D. curriculum.

If we agree that all of these or even most of them are goals of the year of internship, then this question follows: What is necessary in terms of situation, preparation and personal relationships for these goals to be realized? The first necessity is the prior existence of a loving community, where there is a certain freedom of thought and life, enough stability of relationships to provide continuity, and some of whose leaders are really interested in the problem of educating a ministry.

The second is adequate orientation on the part of the congregation as to the nature and purposes of internship. At this point the importance of the preliminary "job analysis" and the "intern committee" becomes apparent. The appointment of the committee, its wrestling with the questions of purpose and program and its putting down in black and white a plan of work for the intern — these steps indirectly help prepare the whole congregation for the coming of the student-intern.

We have used the term *student-intern* very deliberately and consistently as the best title to convey the nature of the program. We have contrasted it with the so-called intern program in another church in our community. The student there comes from the seminary after only one year's work, interrupting his education at the wrong time. He is regarded by the congregation (and even by the minister) as "cheap help," and it is apparent to any observer that he is an assistant, an errand boy, a "youth worker." The purpose and goals of their relationship have not been worked out as we were forced to work them out, and if they had been, would be far different than those at which we finally arrived.

Continuity Desirable

General understanding of the intern program came slowly, but during the year more and more members of the congregation came to an appreciation of what we were doing. If one regards this understanding on the part of the congregation as important, then it is clear how valuable it will be to the total experiment to have continuity in terms of the participating churches. Basic understanding has been established during the first year in the intern committee, and to a lesser degree throughout the congregation, upon which a still more valuable experience can be built in succeeding years.

A third essential, if the goals of the internship are to be realized, is the establishment of personal relationships in which creative interchange is possible and critical evaluation encouraged. That process began for most of us long before the students

arrived on the scene. Correspondence, and in many cases personal visits, helped the process develop. But this is a gradual business and it proceeds more or less slowly according to the persons involved and the peculiarities of the local situation. The process demands mutual respect, mutual concern for the intent and purposes of the program, Christian love, sympathetic understanding — and all of them in depth. This takes time on the part of both supervisor and intern. I can imagine personalities where a creative personal relationship would be almost impossible, and in those cases I hardly see how an effective internship can proceed.

A fourth requisite for achieving the goals of the internship is a well-prepared intern. Perhaps logically this should have come first. The churches and the supervisors can and do expect a variety of interns. But they also anticipate that the student will have mastered some basic skills and knowledge, and that he will have some depth of understanding of the goals and purposes of the program. The curriculum of the first two years for B.D. students is admirably suited to this preparation and our intern this year has had both the equipment and the attitudes which made our year together a productive one.

An Enlightened Congregation

During the first year of the internship experiment our congregation has become more aware of the nature and problems of the education of the ministry, and in the process has learned a good deal about its involvement in the church universal. It has looked more seriously at itself than ever before in its history; scarcely any part of its program of worship, study and service has escaped a critical self-evaluation forced by the presence and work of the intern. The congregation is proud of its part in helping provide this educational opportunity for a promising young man preparing for the ministry.

My opinion is that our present intern has grown in maturity of judgment and purpose, but obviously the faculty will be in a better position than I to determine that. It is fair to say that he found us better prepared for this experience of internship than he expected. He has developed enormously in his identification with the church and has a new appreciation for the pastoral ministry.

The ministers of the church have also been helped. We have been stimulated by the whole program with its inevitable self-evaluation and criticism. We have felt ourselves involved in an experiment that will have real consequences for the future ministry of the church. It has been a year of growth for us, too. We believe that an educational procedure of great merit has begun and that the experiment should be continued in all seriousness, with high expectations for rewarding results.

Whither Homiletics?

By George C. Stuart

A SERIOUS lack of systematic work in homiletics is everywhere evident in theological education today. There is no theological journal devoted to homiletics as such. Few professors of homiletics are prepared either in training or in attitude to shape homiletical methodology in terms of what is taking place in the rest of theological education. Indeed, few professors of preaching take the time to teach the student how to use his total theological education for the work of the pulpit. As a result many preachers buy theological books without knowing how to use them homiletically. In more than half of the theological seminaries in the United States the courses in preaching constitute a part of the curriculum in the department of speech.

The major form of teaching the art of preaching is the so-called "practice preaching" program. In this method the preparation and delivery of sermons is judged primarily upon general speech principles augmented to some degree by presuppositions derived from an expository method of preaching whose theological and exegetical foundations have been displaced in every other field of theological education. For instance, one textbook in homiletics widely used today among students is based upon the expository presuppositions announced by John A. Broadus in 1870, which in turn is based upon concepts derived from Whately's work of half a century before.

While investigations with a view toward improvement continue in biblical studies, systematic and philosophical theology, the history of the church and cultural studies in theological education, homiletics has remained a standardized procedure which generations of preachers have learned and, if they are wise, have tried to forget. For example, the effects of form criticism upon the doctrine of Christ is a commonplace study in contemporary theological education. Yet homiletics has hardly noticed these effects. It has remained for a professor of New Testament, Rudolf Bultmann, to work out some of the presuppositions of form criticism for preaching. In systematic theology the work of Karl Barth has recovered much of the mission and message of the preacher for the church. Few homileticians bother to work out the implications of the method of Barth for the work of the preacher. (Whether one agrees with Barth or not in detail is not decisive for his method.) It has remained for a professor of systematic theology at the University of Lund, Dr. Gustaf Wingren, to develop the homiletical implications of the systematic methods of Nygren, Barth and Bultmann for modern preaching. Homileticians have let others do their proper work for them.

The result is serious for the theological student. Some time ago I listened to a graduate of a well-recognized theological school announce to his fellow ministers that he had spent the first four or five years of his initial parish experience forgetting all that he had learned at seminary in order, as he put it, "to preach to the people in my church." That a preacher must spend four or five years forgetting his theological education in order to preach effectively is a strange result of modern theological education. Where was that student's professor of homiletics during those crucial years?

Many people in our churches today are asking crucial questions of the preacher. Who is Jesus Christ? Is he merely a moral example, a good teacher of ethics, or is he really the Christ of faith as well as the Jesus of history? What is the Christian answer to death? It is no wonder that many men in the pulpit have reduced the Christian answers to questions like these to psychological analysis or sociological inquiry. They were not prepared during their student days to build a homiletical bridge from their courses in systematic theology to their present pulpits.

Many preachers want release from the presuppositions of a biblicism of a past generation, but they were not provided with the proper working tools during their seminary days. Some think that the preacher must not teach his people "the critical method" of biblical exegesis in the pulpit; others like to "shock" their audiences with so-called "new" information about the Bible. Where is the homiletician who can teach the modern preacher to accept his exegetical methods as guides for homiletical methods?

At a time when both biblical studies and theology are working systematically to build the act of preaching into the tissue of the Body of Christ, when most theologians today believe that preaching alone creates the real future of the church, homiletics is weak both as a science and an art.

Whither homiletics? Whither preaching?

GEORGE C. STUART *is professor of preaching at Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, Ind. He previously served a six-year pastorate at the First Christian Church in Bloomington, Ill.*

Among Us—

Some Cautions on Sermon Illustrations

By J. A. Davidson

THE English theologian, Daniel Jenkins, in his recent book *The Protestant Ministry* writes, "Modern preaching has undoubtedly suffered from an excessive and inappropriate use of illustration." Can we preachers gainsay Mr. Jenkins on that?

Many of us have been bemused by the illustrating of sermons and have let the whole thing get quite out of hand. Of course, illustrations are of fundamental importance in preaching, but often we have given them the wrong kind of importance. Usually our illustrations are merely pretty ornaments on rather skimpy cloth. Many of our sermons seem little more than jumbles of anecdotes, quotations and quaint analogies which obscure the gospel as often as they illuminate it.

Present-day preaching is, on the whole, abundantly illustrated. But we must ask ourselves what our illustrations illustrate. Do most of them really shed light on anything pertaining to the gospel? More than one preacher in our time has attained a degree of eminence simply through stringing together great numbers of interesting illustrations. When one reads their sermons one can almost see the file cards flipping over in the minds of the writers. The splendid illustrations indicate wide reading and hint at an efficient secretary presiding over a rather monstrous filing system, but it is often difficult to discern just what is being illustrated.

Perhaps the time has come for a cold-blooded examination of the whole matter. Mr. Jenkins is right: The modern sermon *has* suffered from "an excessive and inappropriate use of illustration." As a sinner who has been made to feel uneasy through thinking on Mr. Jenkins' dictum, I offer to my fellow sinners in homiletics the following suggestions in the hope that they will help a little in getting sermon illustrations into a more adequate perspective.

A sermon must have a strong theme, and all illustrations must be subservient to it. At the heart of every sermon must be an essential proclamation, and it is this which the illustrations must illustrate. They must be considered simply as aids in communicating, intellectually and emotionally, the essential proclamation.

Irrelevance in sermon illustrations is a persisting danger. When we come across a good, strong illustration we are tempted to make use of it as soon as we can, little concerned about its relevance to the theme of the current sermon. But irrelevant illustration can quite effectively knock a sermon off its thematic rails, and the stronger the illustration, the greater is the danger in its irrelevant use.

Hackneyed illustrations menace a sermon's effectiveness. It is alarming to note the number of thoroughly shopworn illustrations that are making the pulpit rounds. The man in the pew must become a little suspicious about how the preacher prepares his sermons when he hears these overused items; and such suspicion inhibits his receptiveness to the preacher's message. Surely a preacher with any sensitivity about his craft will not feel right when he uses hackneyed material.

Pertinent here is the comment of James S. Stewart: "Omnibus volumes of sermon illustrations are the last refuge of a bankrupt intelligence."[1] This may be a somewhat exaggerated criticism, but it does serve to underscore the danger. The poet of lowercase letters, E. E. Cummings, has this to offer in one of his poems:

> i would
> suggest that certain ideas gestures
> rhymes, like Gillette Razor Blades
> having been used and reused
> to the mystical moment of dullness
> emphatically are
> Not To Be Resharpened.[2]

An illustration is not necessarily an argument. And the preacher is fooling himself if he thinks that a few dandy illustrations will make up for his failure to think through his theme and work out its implications. Perhaps at least once a year the preacher should read in a good textbook on logic the section on the fallacy of the false analogy. An awareness of this common abuse may deprive the preacher of some very strong illustrations but it will give more cogency and integrity to his preaching.

Too many illustrations, by their sheer number, can completely obscure the theme of a sermon. The English bishop Hensley Henson, after hearing an excessively illustrated sermon, wrote this in his journal:

> The sermon at Matins was interesting, suggestive, and well delivered, but did not gain in form or in effect by the too numerous quotations. The hearer's mind was diverted and distracted without being assisted. It is a common fault of modern preachers to smother their message, when they have one, which is by no means commonly the case, with illustrations, not always well chosen, and too often taken at second-hand.[3]

The elaborate illustration can, by its very fanciness, divert the listener from the sermon's purpose. I think it was Somerset Maugham, writing on prose style, who said that it is always better to be bald than to wear a curly wig.

A final word: A drama critic once remarked that it was very clever of Bernard Shaw to sugar-coat his pill, but that it was even cleverer of the public to lick off the sugar and leave the pill alone.

J. A. Davidson, *a minister in the United Church of Canada and a regular chaplain in the Canadian Army, is at present chaplain at the Canadian-American Arctic test and training center, Fort Churchill, on the shore of Hudson Bay in northern Manitoba. This summer he will take the position of chaplain at The Royal Military College of Canada, Kingston, Ontario.*

[1] James S. Stewart, *Heralds of God* (London: Hodder & Stoughton Ltd.). Used by permission.

[2] Copyright, 1926, by Horace Liveright; renewed, 1953, by E. E. Cummings. Reprinted from *Poems* 1923-1954 by E. E. Cummings by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

[3] Hensley Henson, *Retrospect of an Unimportant Life, Vol. II* (London: Oxford University Press). Used by permission.

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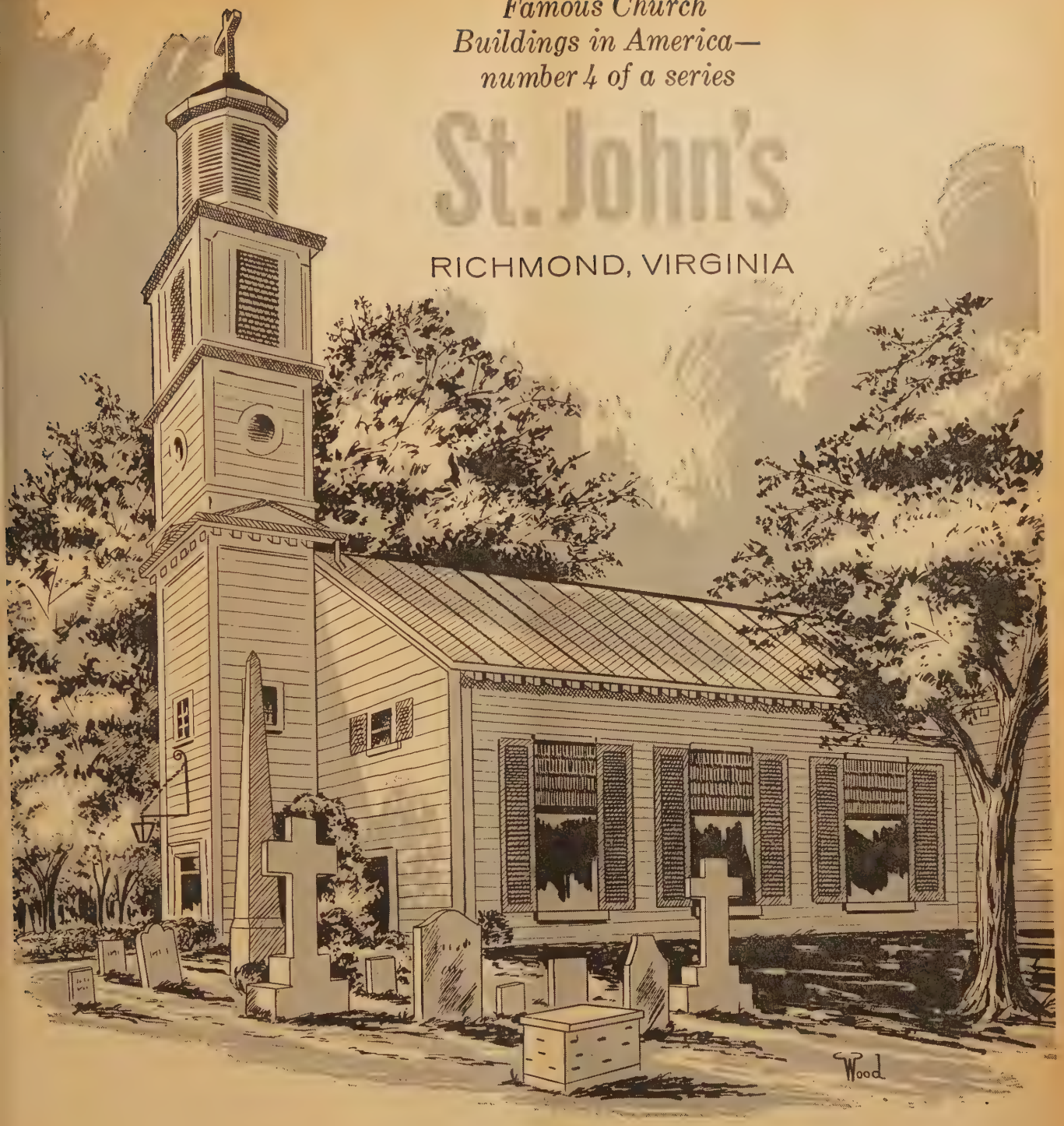

His name was Patrick Henry. And there was fire in his eye when he stood up to say, "Give me liberty, or give me death!" The time was 1775. The place, St. John's Episcopal Church in Richmond, Va. For a handsome 11x14 framing print on heavy, parchment-like paper, write to Ministers Life. Ask for No. 4 of this series and please enclose 25¢ to cover mailing.

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Book Reviews

SEX AND LOVE IN THE BIBLE. *By William Graham Cole. Association. $6.50.*

THIS is a book written with vigor and conviction on a subject far too often left to the rationalists and skeptics.

Recently some reputable journals have carried a full-page advertisement of another book which claims to be an exposé of the Bible, insinuating that the reader will be introduced to its most lurid passages. Anyone who had first read *Sex and Love in the Bible* would be unlikely to find anything new in such an anthology. He would also have been suitably briefed as to the perspective in which such passages should be read.

Dr. Cole's book is outspoken enough to shock the conscience of the unbeliever (usually more tender here than the believer's), but it is primarily a serious attempt at a Christian theology of sex. The reader is thus introduced to the subject via a careful consideration of the nature and purpose of the biblical books, and the theological orientation is preserved throughout.

No one reader will agree with all the suggestions as to reform in our sex teaching and mores, but there is clearly a need for some honest thinking along the lines suggested. Dr. Cole writes with clarity and force, and his book breaks new ground in its total impact on the subject. Not a Christmas present for Aunt Jane but definitely a book for judicious distribution. — *David H. C. Read, Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York, N. Y.*

YOUTH TALKS WITH GOD. *By Avery Brooke. Scribners. $1.50.*

I AM always interested in anyone's attempt to put the language of prayer within reach of young people in their teens. This book is of such an attractive format, with prayers written only one to a page, printed in large letters and covering such a wide range of day-to-day needs that I think it will stimulate any young person. The language is that of boys and girls and the spiritual insights revealed are most refreshing. Mrs. Brooke must have a knack with teenagers and children to be able to interpret their needs so poignantly. Take this example from a prayer on The Way I Look: "O God, when I worry that people will not like the way I look, or speak, or act — help me to remember that they look at me a lot less than I think, but that you watch me always."

There is something quite unconventional about these prayers and yet they breathe the classic spirit of all good prayer. This is a perfect gift book for that young person you want to help along the way. — *Clifford Ansgar Nelson, Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, St. Paul, Minn.*

QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK ABOUT RELIGION. *By W. E. Sangster. Abingdon. $2.25.*

THIS new book offering answers to questions people ask raises an old question: Do people ask such questions? Are they enough concerned about religion and are they sufficiently articulate to raise such questions? The author assures us that these one hundred religious questions have been put to him at one time or another during his long and varied ministry. Not only must we accept his word for it but we must also agree that these are questions people *ought* to ask about religion. The questions do not, as the author confesses, reach "the most intimate things of religion"; but the answers he gives do dismiss many of those formidable guards which keep people outside the inner circles of Christian commitment, devotion and service.

This book is directed toward two groups of people: those interested in religion but not yet committed to it and those committed to religion but not able to show the reasonableness of their position to people who question it. It is written for the thoughtful, inquiring layman, who may or may not phrase his religious perplexities as they are put in these questions, and will therefore be valuable to ministers. — *K.H.*

PAUL AND THE SALVATION OF MANKIND. *By Johannes Munck. John Knox. $6.50.*

A FRESH and original study of the Apostle Paul in the light of his call and apostolate, this book's thesis is that his purpose and mission was no different from that of the other twelve. The gospel of the infant church as proclaimed by all its spokesmen was universal, designed for the gentiles as well as the Jews. Consequently it must have sprung directly from the mission and message of Jesus. There was, therefore, no radical break in missionary intention and theological interpretation between the Jewish disciples of Jesus and Paul, between those whose major work was at home and those who assailed the pagan barriers of the empire in the cause of Christ.

Yet Munck, in delineating his thesis, stresses the importance of the Jewish nature of the original proclamation. Paul was as much a disciple of Judaism as were Peter and James. All the disciples and apostles had as their major concern the salvation of Israel. Yet through their association with Jesus in the flesh and the revelation of God through the risen Savior, they came to see that salvation in the intention of God was for everyone and that the Jews themselves could not be saved without the gentiles. Paul became, therefore, the apostle to the gentiles in order that Israel might in the end benefit from his labors. Consequently Paul, as the direct emissary of God's good news to the gentiles, indirectly becomes likewise the successful evangelist of the Jews as well. As a result, his position in Jewish religious history is supreme. He stands above Moses and is the greatest of all the prophets.

The thesis is delineated in this Jewish setting throughout all the major phases of Paul's apostolic ministry, beginning with the chrismatic nature of his call, an almost Jeremiad coercion into the apostolate without reference to temporal conditions and the influence of events and men, continuing through the exegesis of his major writings and concluding with his trial at Rome.

The author treats Acts as a secondary rather than a primary source for the life of Paul and always interprets it in the light of Paul's letters or, to be more exact, his own interpretation of these letters. In places the book appears to suffer from an almost artificial arrangement of details to fit the author's plan. Yet this is minor. The major point of the book which is that there is a real unbroken continuity in Christianity from Jesus and his disciples to the emergence of the organized world church and that Paul is the chief factor in support of this continuity is in my judgment substantiated. It is to me far more reasonable than the thesis of the Tübingen school that Paul broke with the Jewish religion of Jesus and his followers and was the real artificer of Catholic Christianity.

This is a creative work of scholarship of the highest order and may become a pioneer in the reinterpretation of Paul. — *William R. Cannon, dean of the School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta, Ga.*

FROM WITHIN THESE WALLS. *By Richard L. Evans. Harper. $3.00.*

SHORT essays first heard as the "Spoken Word" portion of the Sunday CBS radio broadcasts from Salt Lake City, Utah, featuring the famous Mormon Tabernacle Choir and Organ, are here compiled in book form by Mr. Evans who both writes and produces the program and delivers the brief messages. They are classic in style and abound with quotations from the best-known writers of prose. Addison, Emerson, Ruskin, Shakespeare,

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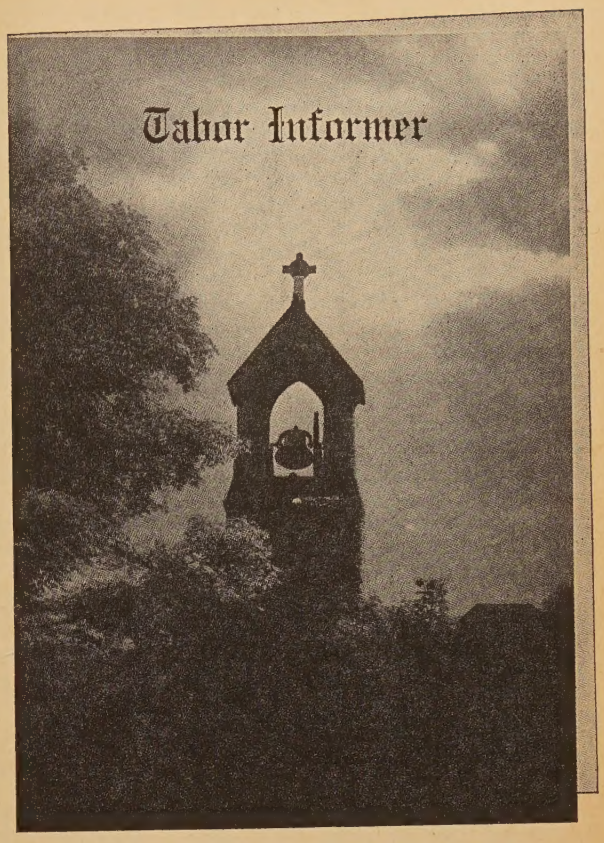

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GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

Bacon, Carlyle, Cicero and others frequently speak from these pages. At a time when the classical touch is missing in much of modern writing, it is good that Mr. Evans reminds us that it still exists. And as its exponent, he writes exceedingly well.

The content of the essays follows faithfully the classical pattern set by style. These wise words are unlike the flashing witticisms or coarse language of the present, which often produces little more than violence and lust as subjects of thought. Through strong and lofty words we are led to think magnificently of life and of our possibilities as God's creatures. Optimism abounds, though not without solemn warnings of the consequences of our thoughtless deeds.

The modern mood is not to trust human nature as kindly as does Mr. Evans. The dark depravity of man's life is played down and the book is not heavily theological. Biblically speaking, there is more of Proverbs here than Psalms, more of the Sermon on the Mount than the soul agony of Paul. These essays are good minute-reading, though they cannot be digested that speedily. They make good themes for short talks and may be used as devotional helps. Ministers will also find good illustrative material and sermon helps within these pages. — *Thomas A. Whiting, First Methodist Church, Valdosta, Ga.*

THE PRICE TAGS OF LIFE. *By C. Roy Angell. Broadman. $2.75.*

THOUGH the sermons in this book are not necessarily related to its title, they will nevertheless enjoy wide reading. The minister who looks for strong intellectual overtones and for quotes from ponderous theological works will not find them here, but the layman will read these sermons gladly. So will ministers who look for sermon help. Roy Angell is a good homiletician and tells a story well. His material seems to come more from his travels than from his reading. There are some who will not agree with the easy solutions found in these messages and will long for a less patent theology. Some might raise questions over biblical interpretation. On the whole, the sermons are simply written, their topics are arresting and they contain much to inspire and help. For those who have appreciated Dr. Angell's other books, this book will be a welcome addition. — *Thomas A. Whiting.*

THE PASTOR AT WORK. *By various authors. Concordia. $6.50.*

HOW MAY the pastor cut through the maze of impossible demands on his time and energy and be an effective minister of the gospel rather than merely "a fixer" or "operator"? The answer to this often frustrating question is the task of this book of twenty-three chapters written by twenty-two Lutheran ministers. Professor Richard R. Caemmerer of Concordia Seminary points to the answer in the introductory chapter: The pastor is primarily a shepherd whose main business is to feed and lead people and "the guiding (administration) is always to the feeding." He must help his people as a group and as individuals to accept their places in the body of Christ in which they will both receive the "law and the gospel" and minister the same to each other. This latter is not primarily to give the pastor more time for study but is part of their privilege and responsibility. Any "piece of church work" that does not accomplish this purpose should be discarded.

It is inevitable that a book with so many authors should have varying degrees of effectiveness in achieving such a worthy aim. For instance, a few of the chapters are more relevant to Lutheran ministers; but most of the chapters have helpful insights well worth the reading of any conscientious pastor. — *Lance Webb, North Broadway Methodist Church, Columbus, Ohio.*

THIRTY YEARS WITH THE SILENT BILLION. *By Frank C. Laubach. Revell. $3.95.*

THIS is the fascinating story of a great man concerned with a great cause — the autobiography of Frank Laubach, distinguished educator, minister and author, describing his world-wide and untiring "adventures" to reduce illiteracy among the millions who can neither read nor write. It tells of the problems and heartaches in his persistent efforts across the globe. He planned to take the Christian gospel to all peoples; he discovered he first had to bring them into the "citizenship of humanity." He planned to start a teachers' normal school in the Philippines as his first goal; he found that he had to teach adults the ABC's instead. He started out with a feeling of racial superiority; after a moving religious experience he found himself completely "color blind."

Dr. Laubach explains how he developed his phonetic picture-language literacy charts in some 250 languages and dialects and how by his famous "each one teach one" volunteer method more than 60 million people have learned to read. Although there are necessarily occasional repetitious problems and solutions in an account of this type, one is nevertheless amazed at the variety of obstacles presented by different areas due to political and religious factors or because of particular intricacies of the languages themselves.

One of the final chapters of the book is entitled "Attempting to Awaken America," and at the age of seventy-six, Frank Laubach is still trying to do just this. Recognizing that almost half of the world is still illiterate and that literacy can be an opening wedge for any idea or movement, he points out that the communists are winning many in Asia and Africa by promising freedom from hunger and ignorance and are educating the illiterate within their orbit while our own American money and effort and way of life is largely confined within our own boundaries. He asks us to share our abundance and knowledge in the direction of compassion, which might well change the direction of history. — *Esther Pike, San Francisco, Calif.*

Pulpit Calendar

July 3 — Independence Sunday.
July 4 — Independence Day.
July 10 — 5th Sunday after Pentecost.
July 17 — 6th Sunday after Pentecost.
July 24 — 7th Sunday after Pentecost.
July 31 — 8th Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 6 — The Transfiguration.
Aug. 7 — 9th Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 14 — 10th Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 21 — 11th Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 28 — Festival of Christ the King.
Sept. 4 — Labor Sunday.
Sept. 5 — Labor Day.
Sept. 11 — 14th Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 18 — 15th Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 25 — 16th Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 25 — Oct. 2 — Christian Education Week.

CALLED TO MATURITY. *By Myron S. Augsburger. Herald Press. $2.50.*

THE juvenile behavior and naive irrationality which characterize an alarmingly large section of contemporary thought and action make any book which deals realistically and persuasively with the problem of spiritual maturity a must on America's reading list. This is such a book. Its first service is to bring a welcome breath of religious realism into the prevailing atmosphere of contemporary revivalism. An active evangelist himself, Mr. Augsburger shares none of the superficial concepts of popular evangelism. He sees revival as a spiritual renewal which involves the realignment of one's life with the Word and the will of God. The new birth is merely the beginning of a process of moral and spiritual growth which has as its end the realization of spiritual maturity.

Spiritual maturity is understood as being the experience by which one's character is conformed to the image of the new humanity as it is realized

n the person of the living Christ. This spiritual maturity is given active expression in terms of discipleship which, for Mr. Augsburger, means obedience to the will of God as that will is expressed in the life and teaching of Jesus. In his effort to define the demands of discipleship Mr. Augsburger, shows no disposition to conform to popular opinion. Declaring that the mission of the church in the world is not to conform to the spirit of the age but to correct it, he calls upon all those who would achieve spiritual maturity in terms of Christian discipleship to quit offering excuses for themselves and begin offering themselves in obedience to God and in service to their fellow men.

While the book is written in a light, attractive style designed to encourage general reading, it is not lacking in theological depth or thoroughly reliable scholarship. The author's understanding of the nature of man and his grasp of God as the only fount from which the resources essential to mature living can flow make this book well worth serious reading. — *Owen M. Weatherly, First Baptist Church, Philadelphia, Pa.*

HOLY WRIT OR HOLY CHURCH. *By George H. Tavard. Harper. $5.00.*

HERE is a thorough historical study of the relative authority of the Scripture and tradition, which is one of the major issues between Roman Catholics and Protestants. The author, a Roman Catholic priest, frankly and without apology accepts and sets forth the viewpoint of his church, namely, that the two belong together, are inseparable and are equally authoritative. He considers this to be the true Christian doctrine, first fully formulated by the early patristic church and continuing as the conventional doctrine of the Western church until the end of the 14th century. In a scholarly fashion he traces the history of the doctrine through patristic and medieval writings up through that century when the first cleavage between Scripture and tradition occurred. The 16th century reformers stepped into the cleavage and asserted the sole authority of the Scripture. The Council of Trent (1546) restored the doctrine in its conventional form. This has been authoritative for Roman Catholic theology ever since. Thus by the end of the 16th century Protestants and Roman Catholics were deadlocked over the issue. The author hopes his study may suggest a way out of the deadlock. At least, as is true of his earlier book *The Catholic Approach to Protestantism*, he hopes this book will encourage and contribute to ecumenical dialogues between the two groups, and that these dialogues ultimately will convince Protestants that the ecumenicity they seek is to be found in the Mother Church. The only proper and Christian way for Protestants to deal with this book is to match it with an equally open, frank, historical and scholarly treatment of their own point of view. — *Ilion T. Jones, San Francisco Theological Seminary, San Anselmo, Calif.*

PULPIT POST

(Continued from page 2)

five years before, the president of this august body, I have heard many authorities speak on and have read much about this territory immediately west of the great city [Kansas City] that bears its name. In addition I have on many nights tried to read while scores of cowboys and Indians, rebel and union soldiers, Jesse James and my old personal friend who ran with him (whose name I spare) have been shot, wounded, macerated and pulverized . . . in TV's portrayal of our colorful past.

Too, I have learned that the Battle of Westport re-elected Abraham Lincoln who was on the ropes until that fateful October 23rd when the rebels turned south on the Kansas line.

What about Eisenhower? And Carrie Nation? And the great psychic Gene Dennis of Atchison? What about my grandfather, Sgt. B. S. Benefiel of the Union Cavalry, Second Indiana, buried in the incomparably beautiful hills of Maple Hill? What about Miss Talley of this windswept territory who took the Metropolitan by storm? What about the superb University of Kansas and its great medical school and my friends and church members on its faculty?

There is no spot on earth except Palestine more historic than the windswept plains of Kansas.

RAY KIMBRELL

Westport Methodist Church
Kansas City, Mo.

THE TRADING POST

MANY OF US are preaching today as though the historical actuality of Jesus were dispensable. We drift in the current theological mood toward an old heresy, a new Docetism. But our people, with an instinct for what is vital are saying to us as the Greeks did to Philip of Bethsaida, "Sir, we would see Jesus." We have no difficulty offering them the contemporary Christ. We can say as Philip did to Nathanael, "Come and see," the testimony of personal experience; as the Psalmist did, "Taste and see," the testimony of internal experience; as the resurrected Christ did to Thomas, "Touch and see," the testimony of participating experience. But how can we show them that One in whom, in the words of C. H. Dodd, "the historical order has received a specific character from the entrance into it of the eternal word of God"?

•

Questions God asks:

1. Where are you? Genesis 3:9
2. Where is your brother? Genesis 4:9
3. What are you doing? I Kings 19:13

•

Simone Weil said of God, "If we remain deaf, he comes back again and again like a beggar, but also, like a beggar, one day he stops coming."

•

The Solidarity of Our Human Guilt: It was said of John Woolman, "He remained among his brethren, bearing on his heart the burden of the common guilt." Eventually the Christian should be able to say of every miserable, sinful person, "There *despite* the grace of God go I."

Solon, the great sage of ancient Athens, when he was asked what would rid the world of injuries, replied: "If the bystanders would have the same resentment with those that suffer wrong."

•

Browning confessed,
"Open my heart and you will see,
Graved inside of it, Italy."
And yours?

•

An old translation of the 10th verse of Psalm 96 had a graphic reading. Instead of saying, "Say among the heathen, The Lord reigneth," the erroneous translation evolved into this prophetic wording, "Say, Our Lord reigneth from the tree."

•

The Solidarity of our Human Peril: ". . . the monkey-rope was fast at both ends; fast to Queequeg's broad canvas belt, and fast to my narrow leather one. . . . I saw this situation of mine was the precise situation of every mortal that breathes; only, in most cases, he, one way or other, has this Siamese connexion with a plurality of other mortals. If your banker breaks, you snap; if your apothecary by mistake sends you poison in your pills, you die. True, you may say that, by exceeding caution, you may possibly escape these and multitudinous other evil chances of life. But handle Queequeg's monkey-rope heedfully as I would, sometimes he jerked it so, that I came very near sliding overboard. Nor could I possibly forget that, do what I would, I only had the management of one end of it." — from Herman Melville's *Moby Dick.*

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